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MRS. SAROJINI NAIDU.

**SPEECHES AND WRITINGS  
OF  
SAROJINI NAIDU**

**FIRST  
EDITION**  
*R. A. Natesan*

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## PREFACE.

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Mrs. Sarojini Naidu hardly needs any introduction to the reading public. Her three volumes of Poems have been received, as Mr. Edmund Gosse says, "in Europe with approval, and in India with acclamation."

This, however, is the first attempt to present a collection of Mrs. Naidu's Speeches and Writings. They deal with a variety of subjects such as True Brotherhood; Personal Element in Spiritual Life; Education of Indian Women; Indian Women's Renaissance; Women in National Life; Hindu-Muslim Unity; Ideals of a Teacher's Life; Ideal of Civic Life; Co-operation among Communities; and Self-Government for India. There are also numerous other addresses covering a wide range of topics intimately connected with India's advancement.

To make the collection up-to-date, her recent Madras Speeches and her addresses at the Calcutta Congress and the Moslem League are also included.

*THE PUBLISHERS.*



### A GREETING TO SAROJINI.

The following greeting to Sarojini, the Indian poetess, is from an English writer in *The Indian Magazine and Review* :—

Sarojini, sister, the breezes that bear  
The sound of thy feet through the Orient air,  
With tinkling of bells to the land of the West,  
Where thy brothers, the poets, so long have their rest,  
Shall waft back their brotherly greeting to thee,  
Our newly-found sister, Sarojini.

Nor alone to thy home shall the welcoming sound  
Reach Ind's hills and its valleys around,—  
Where the Pleiads shine brightly, the summit of fame,  
They shall raise to the stars thy melodious name,  
Sarojini, Sarojini,  
Our newly-found sister, Sarojini.

July, 1904.

A. ROGERS.

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Mrs. Naidu is, I believe, acknowledged to be the most accomplished living poet of India—at least of those who write in English, since what lyric wonders the native languages of that country may be producing I am not competent to say. But I do not think that any one questions the supreme place she holds among those Indians who choose to write in our tongue. Indeed, I am not disinclined to believe that she is the most brilliant, the most original, as well as the most correct, of all the natives of Hindusthan who have written in English.

EDMUND GOSSE.

They (her poems) treat in a delicately evasive way, of a rare temperament, the temperament of a woman of the East, finding expression through a Western language and under partly Western influences. They do not express the whole of that temperament : but they express, I think, its essence : and there is an Eastern magic in them.

ARTHUR SYMONS.

# SAROJINI NAIDU'S SPEECHES AND WRITINGS

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NILAMBUJA.

THE FANTASY OF A POET'S MOOD.

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*The following contribution appeared in the "Indian Ladies' Magazine" for Dec. 1902:*

A woman was walking alone on the shores of a lake that shone like a great fire-opal in its ring of onyx-coloured hills; and her movements were full of a slumberous rhythm, as if they had caught the very cadence of the waters.

A strangely attractive figure, delicate as the stem of a lotus, with an indescribable languor pervading like a dim fragrance, the grace of her flower-like youth. Two unfathomably beautiful eyes flashed from the sensitive oval of a face, not in itself of an extraordinary beauty, but singularly expressive, a subtle revelation, as it were, of the lyric soul within. The heavy hair enfolding in its coils a faint odour of incense-fumes was wound about her head,

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and wreathed with sprays of newly-opened passion-flowers. The dusky fire of amethysts about her throat and arms, the sombre flame of her purpled draperies embroidered in threads of many-coloured silk and silver, brought out in their perfection, the golden tones, so luminously pale, of her warm, brown flesh. A clinging vapour of dreams hung about her like a veil, investing her with a glamour, as of something remote and mystic, and touched with immemorial passion.

\* \* \* \* \*

Slowly the versatile splendour of the sunset melted into one fleeting moment of twilight that spread itself like a caress over the hills and valleys of acacia and ripening corn. Slowly she left the shore and threaded her way through a garden — herself, a shadowy fantasy among its winding shadows—and entered a courtyard of oleanders and pomegranate trees. On the steps of a long pillared hall dimly lighted by burning wicks steeped in copper vessels of sandal-oil, she paused, arrested by the vivid charm of the picture before her, and a smile of pure sensuous pleasure pierced through the rapt spirituality of her face.

An exquisite picture ! A group of girls of her own age were lounging above the chamber like enormous birds or blossoms, in floating raiment of gold and scarlet and green. One, with daintily-jewelled fingers, was embroidering with filmy threads, some fabric-like auroral mist ; another lay back among her pillows, in an attitude of seductive indolence, crushing an aromatic spice between her teeth, one foot audaciously crossed above her knee ; a third leaned up against a pillar carved with antique legends, singing to herself vague snatches of a love-song. In a moment all three suspended their various idleness to welcome the intruder who loitered among one second to play with the pigeons that hovered about the ceiling.

Then she passed up a steep corridor that led her to her own chamber, followed by a murmur of love mingled with a sense of regret, of incomprehension. She was so inexplicably removed and separate from their brilliant, flower-like life that asked for nothing more than the ephemeral dew and the amber sunshine, that was so naively content, so frankly enchanted with its own frail purposeless existence. \* \*

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A wide, latticed chamber with windows that opened to the dawn. Its violet hangings worked with devices in gold and silver, the garlands of lilac-tinted lotus buds about the door-ways, the subdued radiance of the torches on the walls, the cerulean smoke of incense from a brazen censer, the gleam of scattered ornaments of carved ivory and fretted silver, the very detachment of its situation from the rest of the dwelling lent to this room a peculiar significance and fascination, at once austere and sumptuous, as of a shrine dedicated to the goddess of mystery and dreams.

The dreamer stood alone in her temple of dreams, leaning out into the darkness. Her brows were bent as if with the burden of an unknown loneliness, her hands were stretched out as if with the weariness of a futile striving to pluck an unattainable desire. Her mouth was sorrowful as if with the silence of one who cannot render aright the music of inner voices, so importunate in their cry for expression. Memories of her far-off childhood came echoing through the gray desolation of her mood. A lyric child standing in the desert of her

own lonely temperament, watching the stars, till she had caught from their inaccessible fires the soaring flame of a manifold enthusiasm, a myriad-hearted passion for humanity, for knowledge, for life, above all, for the eternal beauty of the universe. Thenceforth she had moved in the shadow of a perpetual mystery, consumed with a deep intellectual hunger, an unquenchable spiritual thirst, for ever seeking the ecstasy of Beauty in the voice of the winds and the waters, in the ethereal glory of dawn upon the mountains, in the uttered souls of poets and prophets, the dreamers and teachers of all ages and every race; but most of all, with a tremulous longing in the touching beauty of human faces and the secret poetry of every human life. Dwelling in the midst of those to whom the opulent loveliness of this earth is an ultimate end, all the sweeter for a knowledge of its perishable charm, and the delights of this material life with its dramatic experiences, a satisfying ideal all the dearer for a consciousness of its evanescent quality, she was for ever possessed by an intolerable desire to penetrate to the hidden eternity at the core of the most trivial accidents of



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human destiny, the most fleeting moment of this radiant and mutable world.

So the ardent years of her childhood had fled away in one swift flame of aspiration ; and the lyric child had grown into the lyric woman. All the instincts of her awakening womanhood for the intoxication of love and the joy of life were deeply inter-fused with the more urgent and intimate need of the poet-soul for a perfect sympathy with its incommunicable vision, its subtle and inexpressible thought.

\* \* \* \* \*

A flute-like laughter of delicate revels, a reed-like music of singing voices floated up through the star-wrought silence. She paused in the heart of her reminiscence, and smiled a gradual smile that had in it the profound sadness of invisible tears. Ah ! how she had lost count of the years, and missed the gracious birthright of her youth, so utterly had she seemed to pass away beyond the measurable shadow of time into the infinite loneliness of her soul's ecstasy for Beauty. And the dreamer so insatiable for immortality, who was a woman full of tender mortal wants, wept bitterly for her unfulfilled inheritance of joy.

## TRUE BROTHERHOOD.

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*The following is a lecture delivered at a Public Meeting held under the auspices of the Historical Society, Pachaiyappa's College, 1903:*

You know that you are provincial—and you are more limited than that—because your horizon is bounded almost by your city, your own community, your own sub-caste, your own college, your own homes, your own relations, your own self. (*Loud cheers.*) I know I am speaking rightly, because I also in my earlier youth was afflicted with the same sort of short-sightedness of the love. Having travelled, having conceived, having hoped, having enlarged my love, having widened my sympathies, having come in contact with different races, different communities, different religions, different civilisations, friends, my vision is clear. I have no prejudice of race, creed, caste or color. Though, as is supposed, every Brahmin is an aristocrat by instinct, I am a real democrat, because to me there is no difference between a king on

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his throne and a beggar in the street. And until, you, students have acquired and mastered that spirit of brotherhood, do not believe it possible that you will ever cease to be provincial, that you will cease to be sectarian—if I may use such a word—that you will ever be national. If it were otherwise, there should have been no necessity for all those Resolutions in the Social Conference yesterday. I look to you and not to the generation that is passing; it is the young that would have the courage to cast aside that bondage to make it impossible for the Social Conference of ten years hence to proclaim its disgrace in the manner in which it was proclaimed yesterday and in which I took part (*continued cheers*). Students, if facilities come in your way, travel; because the knowledge that comes from living contact with men and minds, the inestimable culture that comes through interchange of ideas, can never be equalled and certainly not surpassed by that knowledge between the covers of textbooks. You read the poems of Shelley on “Liberty.” You read the lecture of Keats on the “Brotherhood of Man,” but do you put them all in practice? Reading is one

thing. It is a very different thing to put it into practice by your deeds. It is difficult to follow in reality the proverb that all men are brethren. Therefore, to you, young men, we look for the fulfilment of the dreams that we have dreamed. To you we look to rectify the mistakes we have made. To you we look to redeem the pledges we have given to posterity. I beg of you, young men, nay, I enjoin upon you that duty that you dare not, if you are men, separate from your hearts and mind and spirit. I say that it is not your pride that you are a Madrassee, that it is not your pride that you are a Brahmin, that it is not your pride you belong to the South of India, that it is not your pride you are a Hindu, but that it is your pride that you are an Indian. I was born in Bengal. I belong to the Madras Presidency. In a Mahomedan city I was brought up and married and there I lived; still I am neither a Bengalee, nor Madrassee, nor Hyderabaddee but I am an Indian, (*cheers*) not a Hindu, not a Brahmin, but an Indian to whom my Mahomedan brother is as dear and as precious as my Hindu brother. I was brought up in a home, that would never

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have tolerated the least spirit of difference, in the treatment given to people of different classes. There you will find that genuine spontaneous love shown to them. I was brought up in a home over which presided one of the greatest men of India and who is an embodiment of all great lores and an ideal of truth, of love, of justice and patriotism. That great teacher of India, had come to us to give immortal inspiration. That is a home of Indians and not of Hindus or Brahmins. It is because that my beloved father said, "Be not limited even to the Indians, but let it be your pride that you are a citizen of the world," that I should love my country. I am ready to lay down my life for the welfare of all India. I beg of you, my brothers, not to limit your love only to India, because it is better to aim at the sky, it is better that your ideals of patriotism should extend for the welfare of the world and not be limited to the prosperity of India and so to achieve that prosperity for your country ; because, if the ideals be only for the prosperity of your country, it would end where it began, by being a profit to your own community and very probably to your own

self. You have inherited great dreams. You have had great duties laid upon you. You have been bequeathed legacies for whose suffrage and whose growth and accumulation you are responsible. It does not matter where you are and who you are. Even a sweeper of streets can be a patriot. You can find in him a moralising spirit that can inspire your mind. There is not one of you who is so humble and so insignificant that can evade the duties that belong to you, that are predestined to you and which nobody but you can perform. Therefore each of you is bound to dedicate his life to the up-lifting of his country.

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## PERSONAL ELEMENT IN SPIRITUAL LIFE.

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*The following is a lecture delivered at the Theistic Conference held at Calcutta in 1906:*

The title of the Lecture is the "Personal Element in Spritual Life," and by the word "spiritual" I do not mean merely the religious or ethical side but even the highest ideal of manhood or womanhood. At this great moment, when there is abroad so much enthusiasm and when all the best energies and ambitions of the people of India are directed towards the re-establishing of the social and political ideals of the country, it is well for us to remember that no results are of any lasting value that are not obtained by the light of the spirit. I say that all the glories of Greece and all the grandeur that was of Rome have perished because of want of this light of the spirit. But the advancing hope for the salvation of India lies in this magnificent fact that our civilisation in the past was highly spiritual and the powers of the spirit, though they may be dimmed, can

never die. (*Applause.*) I want you to realise, all of you who are here present, that each of you is an indispensable spark in the rekindling of the manifold fires of National life. Many of you, I have no doubt, are acquainted with that great Persian poet and astronomer, Omar Khyyam, whose beautiful poetry is equally the wonder and delight of East and West. Some there are who say he is somewhat of a *Sufi* and more that he was merely a dreamer of dreams, but whether he was a *Sufi* or a dreamer of dreams, his teachings and his singings of lore among the roses and *bulbuls* of the Persian gardens have contributed to the literature of the world one immortal phrase which might stand for the very epigram of the scriptures. It might stand for the very essence of all the spiritual and secular doctrine and traditions handed down to man about the personal element in spiritual life. He says in his wonderful *Rubyat* :—

“I sent my soul into the invisible,  
Some letter of that after life to spell,  
And by and by my soul returned to me  
Answered, myself am heaven and hell.”



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Turn where you will, to the scriptures of the Hindus or the mandates of Zoroaster, the Koran of the Mahomedans, to the teachings of Christ or the teachings of Lord Buddha under the Bo Tree, you will find this great point of unity among them, that in all these religions the greatest emphasis is laid on two essential points. First, terrible individual responsibility of every human being for his own destiny ; and, secondly, the unique and incommunicable personal relationship with its Master Spirit. The life of the spirit is not a thing that we can attain, but it is interwoven like a golden thread through the very fabric of our existence. I want you to realise, my friends, that even so there is a state of divinity which it is possible, nay, it is necessary, that we must develop up to its full fire of godhead. There is no one among you so weak or so small that he is not necessary to the divine scheme of eternal life. There is no one among you so small, so frail, so insignificant that he cannot contribute to the divinity of the world. If he should fail let him fail. Does success or failure count for anything in the life of the spirit ? No ; it is endeavour that is the very soul of life.

You all remember that when Napoleon, the greatest hero of the 19th century, was taunted with his lack of ancestry, how superbly he held up his head and said, "I am the ancestor." I hope that each of you has that self-knowledge and that self-reverence that enable you to say, "I am the ancestor." For it is the bounden duty of every human being to contribute something individual and distinct to the sum-total of the world's progress to justify his existence (*hear, and applause*)--and is there any among you so small in spirit that he will not realise the dictum that Plato sent forth into the world--Man, know thyself. Self-knowledge is only the first step in the ultimate destiny of man. You, sons of India, whom I speak to to-day, and you, daughters, whom I am also addressing, know that you are responsible for the call upon you for ennobled lives, not merely for the glory and prosperity of your country, but for the higher patriotism that says the world is my country, and all men are my brothers. You must ask for the larger vision that looks beyond the fleeting pomps and glories of to-day and knows that the destiny of the souls lies in immortality and

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eternity. Friends, it is not for me to speak to you, no better than I can tell you, what an infinity of the divinity is hidden within you. It is not for me to point the way to you, it is for you to pray in secret, and to reverence that beauty within your lives, those divine principles that inspire us. It is for you to be the prisms of the love of God.

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## EDUCATION OF INDIAN WOMEN.

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*The following is a lecture delivered at the Indian Social Conference, Calcutta, 1906:—*

It seems to me a paradox, at once touched with humour and tragedy, that on the very threshold of the twentieth century, it should still be necessary for us to stand upon public platforms and pass resolutions in favour of what is called female education in India—in all places in India, which, at the beginning of the first century was already ripe with civilization and had contributed to the world's progress radiant examples of women of the highest genius and widest culture. But as by some irony of evolution the paradox stands to our shame, it is time for us to consider how best we can remove such a reproach, how we can best achieve something more fruitful than the passing of empty resolutions in favour of female education from year to year. At this great moment of stress and striving, when the Indian races are seeking for the ultimate unity of a common

national ideal, it is well for us to remember that the success of the whole movement lies centred in what is known as the woman question. It is not you but we who are the true nation-builders. But it seems to me that there is not even an unanimous acceptance of the fact that the education of women is an essential factor in the process of nation-building. Many of you will remember that, some years ago, when Mrs. Sathianadhan first started "The Indian Ladies' Magazine," a lively correspondence went on as to whether we should or should not educate our women. The women themselves with one voice pleaded their own cause most eloquently, but when it came to the man there was division in the camp. Many men doubtless proved themselves true patriots by proving themselves the true friends of education for the mothers of the people. But others there were who took fright at the very word. "What," they cried, "educate our women? What then will become of the comfortable domestic ideals as exemplified by the luscious 'halwa' and the savoury 'omelette'?" Others again were neither "for Jove nor for Jehovah," but were for compromise,

bringing forward a whole syllabus of compromises. "Teach this," they said, "and not that." But, my friends, in the matter of education you cannot say *thus far and no further*. Neither can you say to the winds of Heaven "Blow not where ye list," nor forbid the waves to cross their boundaries, nor yet the human soul to soar beyond the bounds of arbitrary limitations. The word education is the worst misunderstood word in any language. The Italians, who are an imaginative people, with their subtle instinct for the inner meaning of words have made a positive difference between *instruction* and *education* and we should do well to accept and acknowledge that difference. *Instruction* being merely the accumulation of knowledge might, indeed, lend itself to conventional definition, but *education* is an immeasurable, beautiful, indispensable atmosphere in which we live and move and have our being. Does one man dare to deprive another of his birthright to God's pure air which nourishes his body? How then shall a man dare to deprive a human soul of its immemorial inheritance of liberty and life? And yet, my friends, man has so dared in

the case of Indian women. That is why you men of India are to-day what you are : because your fathers, in depriving your mothers of that immemorial birthright, have robbed you, their sons, of your just inheritance. Therefore, I charge you, restore to your women their ancient rights, for, as I have said it is we, and, not you, who are the real nation-builders, and without our active co-operation at all points of progress all your Congresses and Conferences are in vain. Educate your women and the nation will take care of itself, for it is true to-day as it was yesterday and will be to the end of human life that the hand that rocks the cradle is the power that rules the world.

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## A PLEA FOR SOCIAL REFORM.

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*Under the auspices of the Hindu Social Reform Association, Secunderabad, presiding over a meeting in which Mrs. Idafaye Levering, M. D., delivered an address on the above subject, in December 1906, Mrs. Sarojini made a speech in which she said :*

The castigation she (Mrs. Idafaye Levering) inflicted was rather severe to sensitive persons. But the evils that are eating the vitals of society and the support and refuge which the community in general lends to them, make it impossible for any sensible man to think of the severity of the chastisement, nay, it would rather seem that no goading, however painful, may be considered too much even by orthodox persons in respect of certain evil customs, such as infant marriage, Varasulkam, Kanyasulkam, Nautches, extravagant expenditure on social and religious occasions and glaring disparity of age in marriages, etc. She had been told that her remarks on Social Reform questions on past occasions offended the leaders of Secunderabad,

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but she would give expression to the same remarks at the risk of offending them if they happened to be present. Every place of any importance in India has a Social Reform Association. But what have they done? The word 'to-day' is nowhere to be found in our dictionary. 'To-morrow' is the watchword. There is anxiety shown everywhere for the introduction of Social Reforms into the families of others but not in one's own family. When the point is urged home some plea or other comes in for procrastination. A graphical comparison of the past and present of India was made. In days of yore, India possessed real men who honoured women and spared no pains to raise them to their level and make them helpmates. Ancient women of India recognised the worth of man and were prepared to make any sacrifice for their sake. Men of those days had sufficient worth in them and if women performed *sati* they did it out of love and regret for their men. But do men of our days deserve *sati*? What sort of men do we find now? They are not men at all. They can be called the degenerate descendants of ancient heroes.

## HINDU WIDOWS.

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*At the 22nd Session of the Indian National Social Conference held at Madras in December 1908, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu moved the following Resolution :—*

*“This Conference invites all communities concerned to give their earnest endeavours to save Hindu widows from the customary disfigurement, to ameliorate their condition by providing them with educational facilities and a Widows’ Home after the model of Professor Karve’s so that they may become better qualified than now to be sisters of mercy and useful and respected members of Society, and also by placing no obstacles in the way of their re-marriage.”*

In doing so she characterised the necessity for having a resolution on this subject on the agenda as a national disgrace. While other countries were advanced in civilisation, they in India, were still dealing with primitive social questions which they should have outlived long ago. She hoped that the day would come very

soon when it would not be required that they should proclaim to the world their national disgrace. Only during the last three days they met together in Council, deliberating how to achieve their political freedom. Did they believe, were they so presumptuous as to think that such a thing would be possible, when at the very core of their social organisation they had this degrading cancer! It seemed incredible to any thinking mind that it was possible for the sons of a country that had produced a law-giver like Manu who taught the ideals of justice, a country that produced Lord Buddha who taught ideals of love, to have so forgotten and to have fallen so low that they had lost the instincts of their chivalry to which the Hindu widow had a claim, first for the weakness of her sex, and next for the sake of her suffering. (*Cheers.*) It was still more incredible that the daughters of a country that had produced such immortal women, whose names came down the annals of their civilisation, should so far have lost, not merely their mother-love, but should also have forgotten the very first principles of their religion, that love was the Fatherhood of God, the

Brotherhood of man and the Sisterhood of woman ? In conclusion, she advocated the establishment of Widows' Homes in all parts of the country for the education of widows.

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## IDEALS OF EDUCATION.

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*At a public meeting held at the Congress pavilion in Dec. 1908, at Madras, under the auspices of the Pachaiyappa's College Historical Association, the Hon. Pundit Madan Mohan Malaviya delivered an address on the above subject. Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, who next spoke, said:*

She was painfully touched with the condition of girls in this country. Women, as they did in other advanced countries, formed a most potent factor in the political evolution of a country. She deplored the fact that while men were educated and were keeping abreast with the advance of the world, imbibing new thought and new sentiments, women were lagging behind and were incapacitated to be true companions of their husbands, so that they might have their own voice heard in the family as well as in the community. How could a well-built edifice with beautiful apartments appear beautiful if almost the very foundation was shaking. In the building of a Nation, the development of a signal sense

of patriotism among them was the most cardinal virtue they had to cherish if their country should form a potent factor in the comity of the nations of the world. Selfishness and self-seeking was the bane of the community. If they would sincerely ameliorate their fallen condition, the first thing they had to do was to root out self-seeking. Each individual had to merge himself in the community, the community in the collective whole of the country. Not till then, all this clamour could subside. If each one was prompted by that high sense of duty to the country and should feel that he is an Indian and not a Brahmin or a Mahomedan, individually, that would be the right step they would have taken in the right path. Unless and until they raise the fallen condition of women in this country and make their voice heard, India's salvation was only a distant dream.

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## HINDUS AND MUSSALMANS.

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*Mrs. Sarojini Naidu wrote as follows to Mr. G. A. Natesan, the Editor of the "Indian Review," before she left Hyderabad for England in June, 1913:—*

One request I should like to make of you as an editor and leader of Indian opinion. I feel we have come to a very critical time in our history and that a great responsibility lies with those who are in the position of our leaders. You have realised that the Mussalmans have definitely held out their hand to the Hindus. Be gracious, be wise, be brave and make the Hindus to hold out their hand to the Mussalmans at the next Congress. Do not analyse motives too closely, but take the proffered hand and hold it fast, and so represent truly the Indian world as far as your influence reaches—and, I believe, it reaches far. I am going away a very sick person—as I believe my illness is of a serious nature, and I may be away in Europe for a year—but this is the request I am making to all my friends who lead public opinion.

## MRS. GANDHI.

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*Mrs. Sarojini Naidu addressed the following letter to Lady Mehta in February, 1915:*

I venture to write to you as I see by the papers that you are the presiding genius of the forthcoming function to welcome my friend, Mrs. Gandhi, home again. I feel that though it may be the special privilege of the ladies of Bombay to accord her this personal ovation, all Indian women must desire to associate themselves with you in spirit to do honour to one who, by her race, qualities of courage, devotion, and self-sacrifice has so signally justified and fulfilled the high traditions of Indian womanhood.

I believe I am one of the few people now back in India who had the good fortune to share the intimate homelife of Mr. and Mrs. Gandhi in England: and I cherish two or three memories of this brief period in connection with the kindly and gentle lady, whose name has become a household word in our midst, with her broken health and her invincible fortitude—the fragile



body of a child and the indomitable spirit of a martyr. 5135.

I recall my first meeting with them the day after their arrival in England. It was on a rainy August afternoon last year that I climbed the staircase of an ordinary London dwelling house to find myself confronted with a true Hindu idyll of radiant and ascetic simplicity. The great South African leader who, to quote Mr. Gokhale's apt phrase, had moulded heroes out of clay, was reclining, a little ill and weary, on the floor eating his frugal meal of nuts and fruit (which I shared) and his wife was busy and content as though she were a mere modest housewife absorbed in a hundred details of household service, and not the world-famed heroine of a hundred noble sufferings in a nation's cause.

I recall too the brilliant and thrilling occasion when men and women of all nationalities from East and West were gathered together to greet them in convincing proof that true greatness speaks with a universal tongue and compels a universal homage. She sat by her husband's side, simple and serene and dignified in the hour of triumph as she had proved herself simple

and serene and dauntless in the hour of trial and tragedy.

I have a vision too of her brave, frail, pain-worn hand must have held aloft the lamp of her country's honour undimmed in one alien land, working at rough garments for wounded soldiers, in another . . . Red Cross work.

But, there is one memory that to me is most precious and poignant, which I record as my personal tribute to her, and which serves not only to confirm but to complete and crown all the beautiful and lofty virtues that have made her an ideal comrade and helpmate to her husband. On her arrival in England in the early days of the war, one felt that Mrs. Gandhi was like a bird with eager outstretched wings longing to annihilate the time and distance that lay before her and her far-off India, and impatient of the brief and necessary interruption in her homeward flight. The woman's heart within her was full of yearning for the accustomed sounds and scenes of her own land and the mother's heart within her full of passionate hunger for the beloved faces of her children . . . . And yet when her husband, soon after felt the call,

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strong and urgent, to offer his services to the Empire and to form the Ambulance Corps that has since done such splendid work, she reached the high watermark of her loyal devotion to him for she accepted his decision and strengthened his purpose with a prompt and willing renunciation of all her most dear and pressing desires. This to me is the real meaning of *Sati*. And it is this ready capacity for self-negation that has made me recognise anew that the true standard of a country's greatness lies not so much in its intellectual achievement and material prosperity as the undying spiritual ideals of love and service and sacrifice that inspire and sustain the mothers of the race.

I pray that the men of India may learn to realize in an increasing measure that it is through the worthiness of their lives and the nobility of their character alone that we women can hope to find the opportunity and inspiration to adequately fulfil the finest possibilities of our womanhood even as Mrs. Gandhi has fulfilled hers.

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## IN MEMORIUM: GOKHALE.

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*In sending this touching tribute to the memory of the late Mr. Gokhale, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu wrote to the Editor of the "Indian Social Reformer," Bombay: "They are appearing under Gokhale's portrait in Mr. Wacha's forthcoming brochure on the great man: but I should like them first to appear in the 'Social Reformer'."*

Heroic heart! lost hope of all our days!  
Need'st thou the homage of our love or  
praise?

Lo! let the mournful millions round thy  
pyre

Kindle their souls with consecrated fire  
Caught from the brave torch fallen from  
thy hand,

To succour and to save our stricken  
land;

And in a daily worship taught by thee  
Upbuild the Temple of her Unity.

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## REMINISCENCES OF MR. GOKHALE.

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*Soon after the lamented demise of Mr. Gokhale, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu wrote in the columns of the "Bombay Chronicle" an appreciation of the man and his mission. Mrs. Sarojini had ample opportunities to know Mr. Gokhale, and her reminiscences of the great leader will be read with considerable interest.*

My personal association with Mr. Gokhale commenced, as it ended, with a written message. It had fallen to me to propose the resolution on the education of women at the Calcutta Sessions of the All-India Social Conference of 1906; and something in my speech moved him sufficiently to pass me these hurried and cordial sentences which, unworthy as I know myself of such generous appreciation, I venture to transcribe, since they struck the keynote of all our future intercourse. "May I take the liberty," he wrote, "to offer you my most respectful and enthusiastic congratulations? Your speech was more than an intellectual treat of the

highest order . . . We all felt for the moment to be lifted to a higher plane."

An acquaintance began on such a happy note of sympathy, grew and ripened at the last into a close and lovely comradeship which I counted among the crowning honours of my life. And though it was not without its poignant moments of brief and bitter estrangement, our friendship was always radiant, both with the joy of spiritual refreshment, and the quickening challenge of intellectual discussion and dissent. Above all, there was the ever-deepening bond of our common love for the motherland; and, for a short space, there was alone the added tie of a tender dependence, infinitely touching and child-like on such comfort and companionship as I, with my own broken health, could render him through long weeks of suffering and distress in a foreign land.

Between 1907 and 1911, it was my good fortune to meet him several times, chiefly during my flying visits to Bombay, but also on different occasions, in Madras, Poona and Delhi. After each meeting, I would always carry away the memory of some fervent and stirring word of exhorta-

tion to yield my life to the service of India.. And, even in the midst of the crowded activities of those epoch-making years, he found leisure to send me, now and then, a warm message of approval, of encouragement, when any poem or speech or action of mine chanced to please him or the frequent rumours of my failing health caused him anxiety or alarm.

But it was not till the beginning of 1912, when I spent a few weeks in Calcutta with my father, that any real intimacy was established between us. "Hitherto I have always caught you on the wing," he said, "now I will cage you long enough to grasp your true spirit." It was in the course of the long and delightful conversations of this period that I began to comprehend the intrinsic and versatile greatness of the man, and to marvel by what austere and fruitful process he was able to reconcile and assimilate the complex and often conflicting qualities of his essentially dual personality into so supreme an achievement of single-hearted patriotism. It was to me a valuable lesson in human psychology to study the secret of this rich and paradoxical nature. There

was the outer man as the world knew and esteemed him, with his precise and brilliant and subtle intellect, his unrivalled gifts of political analysis and synthesis, his flawless and relentless mastery and use of the consummate logic of co-ordinated facts and figures, his courteous but inexorable candour in opposition, his patient dignity and courage in honourable compromise, the breadth and restraint, the vigour and veracity of his far-reaching statesmanship, the lofty simplicities and sacrifices of his daily life. And breaking through the veils of his many self-repressions, was the inner man that revealed himself to me, in all his intense, impassioned hunger for human kinship and affection, in all the tumult and longing, the agony of doubt and ecstasy of faith of the born idealist, perpetually seeking some unchanging reality in a world full of shifting disillusion and despair. In him, I felt that both the practical, strenuous worker and the mystic dreamer of dreams were harmonised by the age-long discipline of his Brahminical ancestry which centuries before had evolved the spirit of the *Bhagvat Gita* and defined true Yoga as Wisdom in Action. But even he could not



escape the limitations of his inheritance. Wide and just as were his recognitions of all human claims to equality, he had nevertheless hidden away, perhaps unsuspected, something of that conservative pride of his Brahminical descent which instinctively resented the least question of its ancient monopoly of power. One little instance of this weakness—if I may use the word—occurs to me. At the All-India Conference which was held in Calcutta at the end of 1911, in the course of an address on the so-called Depressed Classes, I happened to have remarked that the denial of their equal human rights and opportunities of life was largely due to the tyranny of arrogant Brahmins in the past. My father who was also present at the meeting, noted and ironically rallied me on the phrase which appealed to both his sense of humour and equity. But, to my surprise, I found that Mr. Gokhale regarded the word ‘arrogant’ almost as a personal affront! “It was no doubt a brave and beautiful speech,” he said in a tone of reproach, “but you sometimes use harsh, bold phrases.” Soon after, discussing an allied topic, he burst out saying “You—in spite of yourself—you are

typically Hindu in spirit. You begin with a ripple and end in eternity." "But," I answered, a little nettled, "when have I ever disclaimed my heritage?" Another conversation of these weeks stands out with special significance in the light of coming events. One morning, a little despondent and sick at heart about national affairs in general, he suddenly asked me "what is your outlook for India?" "One of Hope," I replied. "What is your vision of the immediate future?" "The Hindu-Muslim Unity in less than five years," I told him with joyous conviction. "Child," he said, with a note of yearning sadness in his voice, "you are a poet, but you hope too much. It will not come in your life-time or in mine. But keep your faith and work if you can." In March of the following year I met him for a few minutes only at a large party in Bombay given by Sir Pherozeshah Mehta for the members of the Royal Commission. I had recently brought out a new book of verses which just then happily for me was attracting some attention and applause. And Mr. Gokhale's short conversation with me was very characteristic of his attitude of distrust towards such

things. "Does the flame still burn brightly,?" he questioned. "Brighter than ever," I answered. But he shook his head doubtfully and a little sternly. "I wonder," he numbered, "I wonder how the storm of such long duration will withstand excessive adulation and success."

A week later, it was my unique privilege to attend and address the new historic sessions of the Muslim League which met in Lucknow on the 22nd March to adopt a new Constitution which sounded the keynote of loyal co-operation with the sister community in all matters of national welfare and progress. The unanimous acclamation with which it was carried by both the older and younger schools of Mussalman politicians marked a new era and inaugurated a new standard in the history of modern Indian affairs. From Lucknow I travelled, almost without a break direct to Poona, where I was due on the 25th, and on the morning of the 26th, I walked across with the Hon. Mr. Paranjpye from Fergusson College to the Servants of India Society. I found the world-famous leader of the National Indian Congress weak and suffering from a relapse of his old illness, but

busy scanning the journals that were full of comments and criticisms of the Muslim League and its new ideals. "Ah," he cried with outstretched hands when he saw me, "have you come to tell me that your vision was true?"..... and he began to question me over and over again with a breathless eagerness that seemed almost impatient of my words about the real underlying *spirit* of the Conference. His weary and pain-worn face lighted up with pleasure when I assured him that, so far at least as the younger men were concerned, it was not an instinct of mere political expediency but one of genuine conviction and a growing consciousness of wider and graver national responsibility that had prompted them to stretch out so frankly and generously, the hand of good fellowship to the Hindus, and I hoped that the coming Congress would respond to it with equal, if not even greater, cordiality. "So far as it lies in my power," he answered, "it shall be done." After an hour or so I found him exhausted with the excitement of the happy news I had brought him from so far! but he insisted on my returning to complete my visit to him that afternoon.

When I went back to the Servants of India Society in the evening, I found a strangely transformed Mr. Gokhale, brisk and smiling, a little pale, but without any trace of the morning's languor and depression. "What," I almost screamed as he was preparing to lead the way upstairs, "surely you cannot mean to mount all those steps, you are too ill." He laughed, "you have put new hope into me," he said, "I feel strong enough to face life and work again." Presently, his sister and two charming daughters joined us for half an hour on the broad terrace with its peaceful view over sunset hills and valleys and we talked of pleasant and passing things. This was my first and only glimpse and realization of the personal domestic side of this lonely and impersonal worker. After their departure we sat quietly in the gathering twilight till his golden voice, stirred by some deep emotion, broke the silence with golden words of counsel and admonition, so grand, so solemn and so inspiring, that they have never ceased to thrill me. He spoke of the unequalled happiness and privilege of service for India. "Stand here with me," he said, "with the stars and hills.

for witness and in their presence consecrate your life and your talent, your song and your speech, your thought and your dream to the motherland. O poet, see visions from the hilltops and spread abroad the message of hope to the toilers in the valleys." As I took my leave of him, he said again to this humble messenger of happy tidings; "You have given me new hope, new faith, new courage. To-night I shall rest. I shall sleep with a heart at peace."

Two months later, early in June after an absence of fifteen years, I found myself in London once more and among the many friends who greeted me on my arrival was the familiar figure of Mr. Gokhale in wholly unfamiliar European garments and—yes—actually an English top hat. I stared at him for a moment. "Where," I asked him, "is your rebellious turban." But I soon got accustomed to this new phase of my old friend, to a social Gokhale who attended parties and frequented theatres, played bridge and entertained ladies at dinner on the terrace of the National Liberal Club, a far cry from the terrace of the Servants of India Society.

In spite of his uncertain health, he was very busy throughout the summer with his work on the Royal Commission and his anxious pre-occupations with Indian affairs in South Africa, then threatening an acute crisis. But he would often come to see me where I was staying at the house of Sir Krishna Gupta. Mr. Gokhale had a great fancy for cherries, and I always took care to provide a liberal supply whenever he was expected. "Every man has his price," I would tease him, "and yours is cherries." One day, at the end of July, sitting over a dish of ripe red cherries, I broached the subject of a delicate mission which I had undertaken on behalf of the London Indian Association, a new student organization that had only a few weeks previously been founded by Mr. M. A. Jinnah with the active and eager support of Indian students in London. Their earnest endeavour was to provide a permanent centre to focus the scattered student life in London and to build up such staunch tradition of co-operation and fellowship that this young association might eventually grow into a perfect miniature and model of the federated India of the future, the India of their

dreams : and it was their ardent desire to start on their new mission of service with a word of sympathy and blessing from this incomparable friend and servant of India. At first a firm refusal of my request backed by the strict prohibition of his doctors of all undue strain and fatigue somewhat daunted me. But I had a little rashly more or less pledged my word that he would speak, and I redoubled my persuasions. "You not only defy all laws of health yourself," he grumbled, "but incite me also to disobedience and revolt." "Besides,"—and his eyes flashed for a moment, "what right had you to pledge your word for me?" "The right," I told him, "to demand from you at all costs a message of hope for the young generation." A few days later, on the 2nd August, he delivered a magnificent inaugural address at Caxton Hall in the presence of a large and enthusiastic audience of students, and set before them those sublime lessons of patriotism and self-sacrifice which he alone so signally, among the men of his generation, was competent to teach with authority and grace.

Shortly afterwards he left for India to



wage his brave and glorious battle in the cause of his suffering compatriots in South Africa. And though now his health was finally ruined beyond all chance of recovery, it was with the rapture of victorious martyrdom that he wrote from his sick-bed, about the end of December, to tell me how prompt and splendid had been the response of a truly United India to the call of her gallant heroes fighting for right and justice in a far-off land.

On his return to England in the spring of 1914, his condition was so precarious as to cause his friends and physicians the gravest concern; and at first he was confined entirely to bed. But with his ever-gracious kindness towards me, he paid me a visit on the very day he was permitted to leave his room, as I was then too ill to go and see him. "Why should a song-bird like you have a broken wing," he murmured a little sadly; and presently told me that he had just received his own death-warrant at the hands of his doctors. "With the utmost care," he said, "they think, I might perhaps live for three years longer." But in his calm and thoughtful manner there was no sign of selfish

rebellion or fear,—only an infinite regret for his unfinished service to India.

But soon, I was well enough to accompany him on the short motor drives that were his sole form of recreation ; and on mild days, as we sat in the soft sunshine under the budding trees of Kensington Gardens he would talk to me with that sure instinct of his for choice and graphic phrases that lent his conversation so much distinction and charm. “Give me a corner of your brain that I can call my<sup>2</sup>own,” he would say. And in that special corner that was his I treasure many memorable sayings. I learnt to wonder not merely at the range and variety of his culture but at his fastidious preferences for what Charles Lamb has called the delicacies of fine literature. He had also an almost romantic curiosity towards the larger aspect of life and death and destiny, and a quick apprehension of the mysterious forces that govern the main springs of human feeling and experience. One day, a little wistfully he said, “Do you know, I feel that an abiding sadness underlies all that unfailing brightness of yours. Is it because you have come so near death that its shadows

still cling to you"? "No," I answered, "I have come so near life that its fires have burnt me." But like a humming bird, his heart would always return with swift and certain flight to the one immutable passion of his life, his love for that India, which to him was mistress and mother, goddess and child in one. He would speak of the struggles and disappointments of his early days, the triumphs and failures, the rewards and renunciations of his later years, his vision of India and her ultimate goal, her immediate value as an Imperial asset, and her appointed place and purpose in the wider counsels and responsibilities of the Empire. He spoke too of his work and his colleagues, the Royal Commission, the Viceregal Council and the National Congress; and though to the end he remained a better judge of human situation rather than of individuals, I was struck with the essential fairness of his estimates which seemed in one luminous phrase to reveal the true measure of a man. Of one, he said that "He can mould heroes out of common clay," of another that "He has fine sincerity a little marred by hasty judgment," of yet another "He has true stuff in him and that freedom

from all sectarian prejudice which will make him the best ambassador of the Hindu-Muslim unity.' Of a fourth, " He has made those sacrifices which entitle him to be heard."

Of the many pressing matters that occupied his mind at that time, there were four which to him were of absorbing interest. His scheme for compulsory education which, he felt, was the only solid basis on which to found any lasting national progress; the Hindu-Mussalman question which, he said, could be most effectively solved if the leaders of the sister communities would deal in a spirit of perfect unison with certain fundamental problems of equal and urgent importance to both the high privilege and heavy responsibility of the young generation whose function it was to grapple with more immense and vital issues than his generation had been called upon to face; and of course, the future of the Servants of India Society, which was the actual embodiment of all his dreams and devotion for India.

These open-air conversations, however, came to a speedy end. He suddenly grew worse and was forbidden to leave his room

or to receive visitors. But I was fortunate enough to be allowed to see him almost daily for a few hours till his departure to Vichy. In his whimsical way he would call me the best of all his prescriptions. To my usual query on crossing the threshold of his sick-room—"Well; am I to be a stimulant or a sedative to-day,?" his invariable reply was "Both." And this one word most adequately summed up the need of his sinking heart and overburdened brain through these anxious and critical weeks.

The interval between his first and second visits to Vichy he spent in a quiet little cottage at Twickenham as the guest and neighbour of Mr. and Mrs. Ratan Tata, to whom the nation already owes so many debts of gratitude, and the monotony of the long hours of his temporary and interrupted convalescence was often brightened by the presence of friends whose visits to him were really pilgrimages, and sustained by the devoted attendance of Dr. Jivraj Mehta who has since won such proud academic honours, and of whom Mr. Gokhale more than once said: "He will go far and be a leader of men."

From Vichy he wrote, "Here, in this intense mental solitude, I have come upon the bedrock truths of life and must learn to adjust myself to their demands." The outbreak of war in August brought him back to England a little prematurely. But though his health had obviously improved, and he was better able to stand the strain of his arduous work on the Royal Commission, he seemed oppressed with a sharp and sudden sense of exile in the midst of an alien civilization and people. He was haunted by a deep nostalgia which he himself could not explain, not merely for the wonted physical scenes and surroundings but for the spiritual texts and tongues of his ancestral land. His conversation during these days was steeped in allusions to the old Sanskrit writers whose mighty music was in his very blood.

The last occasion on which I saw him was on the 8th October, two days before I sailed for India. Something, may be, of the autumnal sadness of fallen leaves and growing mists had passed into his mood; or, may be, he felt the foreshadowing of the wings of Death. But as he bade me.

farewell, he said, "I do not think we shall meet again. If you live, remember your life is dedicated to the service of the country. My work is done."

Early in December, shortly after his arrival from Europe, he wrote to complain of the "scurvy trick" fate had played him in a renewal of his old trouble; but succeeding letters reported returning strength and ability to work again. In the last letter written the day before his fatal illness, he spoke of his health being now stationary and of his coming visit to Delhi. But it was otherwise ordained. As the poet says, "True as the peach to its ripening taste is destiny to her hour." His predestined hour had already struck. On the 19th February, the self-same stars that he had invoked one year ago to witness the consecration of a life to the service of India kept vigil over the passing of this great saint and soldier of national righteousness. And of him surely, in another age and in another land were the prophetic words uttered—"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."

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## THE CHILDREN'S TRIBUTE TO GOKHALE.

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*Mrs. Sarojini Naidu addressed the following letter to the Hon. Mr. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, President of the Servants of India Society, under date 10th June, 1915, on the occasion of the Tenth Anniversary of the Society :—*

On this proud and melancholy occasion of the tenth anniversary of your Society, you will doubtless be overwhelmed with cordial messages of congratulation from all parts of India, and a sad renewal of tributes and testimonies to the memory of your beloved founder and first President.

To this long garland of greetings will you permit me to add, as a pendant of fresh blown buds, the story of the *Children's tribute to the great Gokhale*?

Sometimes I think that the supremest service of this incomparable servant of India to his country, lies in the everlasting inspiration of his death, more even than in the actual achievement of his life-time; for it has already proved a miraculous



divining-rod over the hidden springs of national feeling everywhere ; and it has made articulate, in a sudden realisation of the indivisible unity of Indian life and sentiment, even in a conservative and self-centred city like Hyderabad with its haughty traditions of isolation from all public affairs outside its own special horizon of interests. Memorable in our public record was the remarkable gathering of men of all communities and classes that for the first time in their experience met together to voice as one man their sense of real loss and grief at India's irreparable loss : unique and epoch-making in our social history : was the even more remarkable gathering of women of all creeds, castes, and ranks and fortunes, who assembled to give expression in six different languages to their sorrow, and the Mussalman ladies vied with the Hindu ladies in the eloquence and sincerity of their mourning. But to me, touching, significant and symbolic beyond all other tokens of reverence and regret has been the tribute of the children of Hyderabad for one whose heart was like a child's and whose life so abundantly fulfilled all their desire and capacity for hero-worship.

## CHILDREN'S TRIBUTE TO GOKHALE. 55

There is an association here of young Hindu and Mussalman boys and children who act Indian and English dramas for their own amusement, but they are not so absorbed in their own pleasures that they do not hear and answer the call of public duty.

Eighteen months ago when Mr. Gokhale's golden voice rang out like a trumpet-call for help on behalf of the suffering Indians in South Africa, and men gave their wealth and women their jewels for the cause, these young patriots, having nothing else, coined their love and talent into gold and gave a goodly contribution in response to their hero's call for aid. Now he is dead; but in their young hearts he lives enshrined. A few weeks ago they came to me and said, "we wish to make our contribution to your Gokhale Memorial Fund. We will stage a play." Last night in the presence of a large and representative audience of all communities, including a striking number of Purdanashin ladies, the association of boys and children gave a brilliant performance in "aid of the Gokhale Memorial Fund." It was a charming play, a

musical fantasy from the Arabian Nights, composed by a member of the association—my seventeen-year-old brother, Harindranath Chattopadhyaya, of whom Mr. Gokhale used to say, when he was only fourteen, “this child’s genius gives me electric thrills”—a play written by a boy and acted by boys and children. The staging was beautiful, and every thing was as perfect as they could render it, not only for the honour of art, but for the honour of the cause for which they were giving their time and talent—the honour of Gokhale’s memory.

They began with a specially composed invocation to the Spirit of Gokhale, also the work of my brother, in which Hindu and Muhammadan boys took part; then followed a poem in Urdu, written for the occasion, by a young Muhammadan poet. The performers realised more than Rs. 600 last night to offer as their share towards the upraising of a local memorial in their hero’s honour.

And so the generations are linked together by the continuity of ideals and a common love inspired by a great and selfless spirit. I think that spirit must have

rejoiced to see how spontaneously and whole-heartedly the younger section of India unconsciously interpreted and fulfilled the sublime lesson he always taught that no gift is more fine or fruitful than personal service leavened by personal love; and he who laid down his life in the cause of Indian unity must surely have given thanks to God that last night, inspired by a common love and a common service, Hindu and Mussalman boys, the young citizens of to-morrow, were animated by one vision, spoke with one voice and were impelled by one inseverable heart of service and devotion.

Pardon me for taking up so much of your time. But you, who are the inheritors of Gokhale's mission of service, ought surely to know wherever the good seed has fallen, that time will reap and destiny knead into bread for the feeding of the hungry spirits in this great country of ours. To-morrow and the hope of to-morrow is always with the young; and so you too like me will know how to appraise the obvious value, and even more the deep underlying significance of the children's tribute to the great Gokhale.

## IDEAL OF CIVIC LIFE.

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*At the Fourteenth Anniversary of the Young Men's Literary Association, Guntur, held on July 5, 1915, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu delivered the following speech :—*

President, Ladies, Gentlemen, and my Friends the Students:—It is of course in accordance with the right of etiquette of the moment and the occasion to say how deeply honored I am by being asked to address you on this auspicious occasion, but, believe me when I say it is not merely in fulfilment of a conventional point of etiquette, but because I feel it with all my heart to be a source of not merely pleasure but honour and privilege to me to be asked to meet you this evening when you are gathered here in your hundreds to celebrate the 14th Anniversary of the institution which, if it has not already, will, I hope, in time, become the very heart-beat of the life of this great and increasingly prosperous and progressive city. As I was listening to the report—so clearly written and effectively read by the earn-

est secretary, I was looking around on this ocean of faces representing all generations that have hitherto contributed to the progress of Guntur and who are going in future to contribute something better than their old generations could offer because of their more limited opportunities.

This morning a most earnest member of this society said to me that a few students started it some years ago which was the centre of their own life and that with them it grew up. As students expanded into larger life, they expanded it with their growth into manhood from its infancy of earlier days. It seems to me a symbolic thing because what one would say to impress on the growing generation that they must carry into expanded intellectual public life all those dreams and all ambitions of dreams. They are merely dreams to them because they are too young to realise them, but when once they had crossed the threshold of manhood and come into the horizon of responsibility and opportunity they are to transmute into deeds; so the origin of this association seems to me to carry its own

## 60 SARAJINI'S SPEECHES AND WRITINGS.

guarantee of unbroken continuity. To-day, after 14 years, the men who started it as students for the use of themselves carried it giving it the best energies, vitality and sacrificing many things, personal pleasures, wealth and comfort because they wished it to grow and become a real heart-beat of the country. Do you not think that it is not merely a prophecy but an actual guarantee of promise almost fulfilled. To-day I do not wish to speak to those who were students 14 years ago when they started this institution. But I wish to speak to those who are going to be the future sustainers of this institution, those who are going to be the inheritors of all the active achievements and even in a greater degree of all the dreams that we dreamt 14 years ago. But I want to tell them what it means to be citizens—the type of citizens. They must be an ideal for the world to follow. Curiously enough it is during the last 14 years that the by-gone generation of students were dreaming dreams and that the institution is a focus of all their dreaming, discussion, of all their hopes of the future. I, too, was young, dreaming dreams, and I too

started carrying my dreams not focussing them in one institution but going on from place to place to speak for the younger generation, to tell them how real were their dreams and how it was possible to realise those dreams. To-day, after 14 years of speaking to young men and young women all over the country, I come to this centre of the Andhra country to speak with the citizens of the Andhra Province. I want to tell you what the ideal of civic life is for you. All over India to-day there is a new spirit awake that thrills the heart of the young generation from end to end, from north and south, east and west, the spirit that is called the renaissance, not a new spirit but a spirit reborn and revitalised in the past that held exactly such ideals and dreams that taught by precept and example, such principles as you wish to fulfil in your life for the service of your country, whether you go to Bengal and speak with young men with the passionate spirit of ideals, whether you go to the Mahratta country and see those intellectual youths with their spirit focussed and ready for any sacrifice, and if you go to South India and see



those vigorous and intellectual types of eyes drinking every word set before them, you realise the young spirit is the same, though it speaks in different vernaculars. Vernaculars are different, races are different, castes are different; but the thing that makes you all is the one spirit that is abroad to-day. You know that the students' movement in Bengal is so much a vital part of the every-day life of the people, that one cannot conceive of the future, not even to-day. In Bengal the student's ideal, fervour and capacity for service does not count the most inspiring factor in the national life. You go to Bombay, the second to London in its commercial greatness, and you find that the greatness and the glory of Bombay does not lie in its beautiful buildings, not in the glory of merchant princes and women hung about in diamonds, but rather it is in the movement to be carried in the small scale of brotherhood because the force of it was so strong and it answers so strongly the need of young generation. It has become to-day the most representative thing of the new spirit of Bombay. The historian writing of the future of

Bombay will not speak of the palaces on the Malabar hill, or of the factories vomiting smoke, or of the motor cars but rather of those young students very many of them ill-clad but whose faces shine like lamp-lights dazzling by night. Take my native State — Hyderabad,—the new spirit is awake there in the city and it is so awake that already it has solved without any consciousness that it has done so, the greatest problem that all our political reformers are trying to solve *i.e.*, the question of Hindu-Muslim unity, and that is the greatest contribution to the future of India that the young generation can make in such places where there exists a problem and an imminent necessity for the solution. That the young generation has done already in the city of Hyderabad. And now coming to the Andhra Province will you believe me that it fills and thrills me with pride to say that while even in those great presidencies that have achieved so much I have even found more the light of rhetoric than of action, I find that within a few years after, the Andhra Provinces began to wake and set their ideals before them and assert their

individual entity because they wished to contribute their characteristic share and their united right to contribute to the future of the federated culture in India. (*Shouts of joy.*) In these few years we find not merely rhetoric from platform from people loving rhetoric but hard work, self-sacrificing devotion, enthusiasm and daily and early sacrifice and personal service. That is what I have found in Andhra country. It is my great privilege to go to Masulipatam for the fifth anniversary of the National College there. I found there and since then I have come very intimately in contact with some of the older and younger men who represented the spirit of what I called the Andhra renaissance. Once more it has been my privilege to come closer to the heart-beat of that Andhra spirit. I was in Pittapur two days ago. There I found not only men but women who began to realise their inviolable right to co-operate with men in re-establishing the historic distinction of their province. They say: "all what we want to do in our little sphere, the little practicable work which is to offer a beautiful and priceless offering to

the feet of our motherland." That is the spirit in which the women of the Andhra Province are working.

What I want to bring to these young citizens before me is this. That it is your duty—you who are in a state of apprenticeship and who are learning the knowledge from the text-books. You will have in a few years to learn in a more difficult university lessons that no man will teach you by the hand. Many of the dreams you dream to-day so light-heartedly will taste bitter in your mouth because you will find so much opposition and so many difficulties. Be true to yourself. I want each one of you to be a worthy worshipper of that great name that is representative of the past ideals that moulded your historic dynasties. It is to realise by the building up of character, however great the opposition in life may be, however obscure your life may be, however insignificant and unknown the position in which you live, it does not matter; each of you can make yourselves worthy devotees of that flame of spirit. Each of you in doing so will be doing the best possible service to your country

and to your race in the world. It is the best way in which you will be able to serve humanity by building up these traits of character that have distinguished your people, viz., valour, intellectual capacity and spiritual devotion.

*Passing on she said:* "The thing which is very necessary for us to remember is that as modern civilisation progresses, as the world becomes more and more international in giving and receiving enlightenment, we are absorbing from other countries as we are giving to other countries. With such ideas, such treasures of knowledge and experience of wider horizon and scientific thought, the responsibility of personal service becomes greater. Life is more complex. I ask you to dedicate your life to this cause, to make your lights ready to be kindled at the flame of devotion, to serve your country worthily. I do not say to you to become teachers to preach or politicians by this or by that. Whatever your sphere in life is, however small you are, remember, you are an indispensable unit in making up that vast social organisation which makes the country a nation. I want you all to remember that

the greatness of a country will not lie in its great men, but in its average good men, who realised the daily life of purity, truth, courage in overcoming such obstacles that stand in the way of progress by giving equal opportunities to all human beings, of all castes and creeds and not to withhold from any man or woman his or her God-given, inviolable right to live to the fullest capacity. That is the meaning of social reform. Give education to low castes. Do give to your women, who are co-operators with you in your generation, for you are building the national character, such a right to qualify themselves for the high and great responsibility of motherhood. In this institution, the most valuable asset—an asset more valuable than all the funds of Zamindars—is the actual spirit of service on the part of the members of the society.

Finance is one of the wants of the Institution ; it seems to me it is a supreme want. If to-day I have come from so far, loving to see the spirit that animates you, you will let me go away with the hope that this Institution will not die simply from want of this help of money (*cries of emphatic "no"*). I beg all of you to rise as

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one man to make this Institution really a representation of the ideals that you believe—the ideals that you wish your children and children's children to inherit.

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## UNLIT LAMPS OF INDIA.

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*Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, replying to the address of the people of Guntur in the A. E. L. M. College Hall, in July, 1915, said :—*

I can hardly tell you how deeply honoured I am to-day by the heartfelt and truly fraternal welcome you have accorded to me. I have learnt to feel that this generous and spontaneous welcome that awaits me wherever I go is not at all a personal tribute but stands as a symbol of what the womanhood of India represents when the men of India give them the same chances as I have had. Go to Bengal and there you see the women with their great spiritual ideals, are like water lilies in their ponds. Go to Bombay or to any other part of India, do you think there is a single house where it does not survive in the richest vitality, all those living ideals that make the names of the women of our country and literature so immortal. There is not a single home in the length and breadth of India, no matter rich or poor, where womanhood is not as great to-day as in the days of Sita and



Savitri, greater perhaps in potential powers because we have gathered a great deal of world experience, of high civilisation and growing responsibility. The whole world-spirit is richer by so many centuries of experience. It is your duty which you have not recognised to fulfil the task of giving the women those very opportunities which you yourselves had, which are necessary for their equipment, to fully realise all these hidden virtues that lie within their souls. The power of Rome has been quenched. That is because the underlying conditions animating their ideals and their civilisation were not of the spirit but of the intellect. The glory of the Greeks and the grandeur of Rome could not be re-vitalised after centuries because they were not spiritual. All their greatness died and became merely historic memories, things that we try to reconstruct from a broken stone in a foreign museum.

But believe me when I say that those who kept alive that fire are not the men who go to earn money, the men who become a little blurred, as it were, in the clearness of vision for mere existence but rather it is their spiritual entity that they kept at

home, that spiritual comradeship that stands at home and tends the family fire. And so it is to them that you must give the opportunity of so equipping themselves and make themselves capable of realising their higher ideals and then it will certainly be never said that our women are backward. They are backward because they have not the lamps to light, not a flame to kindle because you will not give them what is called the daily oil—the opportunity that brings that flame to the lamp. There are many little books with beautiful titles. But I do not know of any that is more symbolic than the “Seven Lamps of Architecture” of Ruskin. But we have seven hundred thousands of lamps in the architecture unlighted because you have refused to give them the things that kindle the flame. If the “Seven Lamps of Architecture” illumine the whole civilization of the West, friends, think of the dazzling illumination that shall light the whole world with a conflagration and radiance that cannot be quenched when the 700,000 Lamps in our national structure are lit for the glory of humanity. I am only one little lamp of clay. But there are thousands of lamps of gold

hidden away for want of opportunity. Instead of thanking you for this I should reproach you for being content with lamps of clay when there are lamps of gold. Let me beseech you not to be content with such small ideals as are represented by any successes that I may have achieved. India will not be great with her ancient greatness. It is only in your hands to give the illumination and it is only by that illumination that we can wake up our sleeping Mother.

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## INDIAN WOMEN'S RENAISSANCE.

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*The following is extracted from an address delivered by Mrs. Sarojini Naidu at the Indian Ladies' Club, Pittapuram, in 1915 :*

The time is ripe when not men but women themselves should learn to recognize the sacred and inalienable trust and responsibility of their womanhood, in shaping the destinies of the country. For it is the womanhood of a nation that is the true giver and true upholder of its ideals, . . . I say that it is time for us all, women of India, to awake, whatever our race, or caste, or creed, or rank in life, to awake and grasp the urgency of the situation, the immediate need of adequate and equal co-operation, and the comradeship in guiding, moulding, sustaining and achieving those lofty and patriotic ideals that thrill the heart of every generation, and in whose fulfilment lies the noblest destiny of man. On this happy occasion I, who have come from so far to be with you, do bring you a message of awakening from the women in

other parts of the country, north and south, east and west, from the women who may, indeed, be separated from you by difference of language and creed and custom and even race, but who are essentially one with you in all those imperishable realities of life that make them co-inheritors with you of common duty and common devotion in the service of the citizens.

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SIR P. M. MEHTA.

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*At a memorial meeting held in Bai Peroze-bai Hall, Secunderabad, on November 28th, 1915, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu who was in the chair said:—*

They were met to mourn the loss of a great man and that, if proof were wanted at any time as to the unanimity of feeling at the loss, it could be judged from the list of names on the programme representing all races and creeds which would emphasise that India was no longer a geographical expression. He was a great figure in the Bombay Presidency and represented the vitality of the nation. To some he was a Parsi, but to others he was an Indian figure, proud to be an Indian, never afraid of popular displeasure or censure. He was not exactly what some called him the apostle of righteousness, but was the one man who laid his life at the altar of his Motherland. His one great lesson to India was his indomitable courage. He was made of the stuff that would die, but not yield, when he said: "I stand to represent the

country's honour." He was loyal to his friends, generous to his foes, and a zealous citizen.

*Mrs. Sarojini Naidu in conclusion said he was a prince of the country and of intellect, and continued :—*

Who can sufficiently extol the sweetness of the man and that invincible sense of chivalry? Who will sum up the tenderness of his heart that made him the champion of women? Who will sum up his chivalry, the grace of head and heart that was so rarely combined in him? He was the golden link between the experience of the older and the enthusiasm of the younger generation.

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## THE MESSAGE OF LIFE.

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*The following address was delivered to the Students' Brotherhood, in Bombay, on August 21, 1915 :—*

Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, in the course of a long speech, said that her message of life would never come amiss to the Students' Brotherhood and to the members of that greater human brotherhood, who had gathered that afternoon in their hundreds, and that it filled her with pride and thrilled her with hope. Sometime ago when the invitation of the Students' Brotherhood reached her and she was asked to have the honour to deliver the annual address to its members, she hesitated for reasons which were other than personal. Not because her health did not permit but because the poverty of her spirit that had not enough wealth to give to so many hungry and clamouring spirits. But, considering it to be her duty as well as her privilege, she accepted that invitation, because she felt that a young generation standing, as Dr. Scott said, on the threshold of life was



waiting for a message and inspiration to make them ready and ripe for the responsibilities and duties which awaited them. She felt it to be a privilege to be there that day. The subject of the lecture, she said, came to her as an inspiration while she was seated by the window of her hotel watching the great stream of life that flowed past, and she was thinking of the message which was given to her by her father, in his last days, who had exercised the greatest influence on her life. And that message was of perennial light and hope, of eternal life and eternal truth. She thought she could do no greater service to the young generation, or no greater honour to the memory of her dead father than to impart the inspiration of his final message. Nothing struck her as more paradoxical than the history of this great country, and of the immortal history of this great nation. Civilisations had come and gone, civilisations had died, as all living things had died, and become mere memories. But when one came to India from many of those ancient civilisations one realised how marvellous, how inexhaustible was the spiritual vitality which had kept up her life to-day. One did

not think of India as dead, to be reconstructed with the fragments of a piece of sculpture or from one coin, looking at the superstructure or image thereof. Rather coming to India one felt that life there in spite of those historic vicissitudes, was progressing in unbroken historic continuity. Though the drums of conquest had rolled over India, all those foreign conquests, all through the many centuries, had left no permanent mark to obliterate her spiritual civilisation. Spirituality was the mainstay of her vitality and she saw when she travelled through the length and breadth of India the same ancient temples from which still resounded the invocations to the same deities which were heard in ancient times, side by side with the modern spinning mills, and girls' schools and other things.

She had been spending a great many years in going from city to city not to see the buildings, not to see the signs of wealth and power, not to be feted at social gatherings, nor indeed to make holiday pleasure, but rather to feel the pulse of that younger generation whose destinies seemed to her to be bound up with the future of India. The special message of life for India to-

day was the message of unity. No longer divided by anything save a difference of mere language, no longer divided by any real or any blasting differences of aspiration, no longer divided by anything through lack of that one thing that makes an intellectual and spiritual meeting ground, that is a common education, one realised that it was the same cry which she heard on all hands, and that was that they wanted to serve their mother country and achieve something.

Human souls and human destinies were guided and moulded and shaped by the special race consciousness and race ideals to which they belonged. Youth's duty lay in so shaping the daily life that never for one moment shall the India of the immemorial yesterday be the same till he knew the destiny of India's to-morrow. So it was for them to take stock of themselves as to what were their possibilities, their opportunities, their obligations and their duties and what special section of that great duty of that complex, that manifold and multiform, duty fell to their share. And then they began to say to themselves that the work

was so great and they as individuals so small: but then they had to remember that no human being was so small as not to be able to fill a niche in the great scheme of life, some little corner that could only be filled by that one individual. But life said to him—to the child—however small and however weak he might be, it had a place for him to fill, unless the child had been faithless in fulfilling that duty, and so in that spirit they accepted their responsibilities, realising that greater men were called upon to play greater parts, and smaller men to fulfil smaller duties, but that each man had his unique destiny, his unique privilege, his immutable responsibilities to fulfil, as best lay in his power—that of service and of sacrifice. Whether they failed or triumphed, it did not matter.

It was from far off Hyderabad, that great Native State, which, as she had said the other day, was the great melting pot of the different races of India, of the Indian religions, she came with a message for not only her children, but for all and every Indian. That message was one of unity. It was a message for all, whether Hindu or Muham-

madan. She came fresh with enthusiasm, fresh with sympathy for them, no matter that hundreds of miles separated them from her, for their hearts beat with the same impulse, they had the same yearning spirit of a young generation, so full of desire to achieve, so full of courage and unity, because life was life, because there was no death, there was no birth, but from day to day, from life to life, from eternity to eternity, there was always human endeavour and the need for the human spirit of God whose temple was built in the heart of man.

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## INDIA'S GIFTS.

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*Mrs. Sarojini Naidu indited the following verses for the Report of the Hyderabad Ladies' War Relief Association, Dec. 1915:*

Is there aught you need that my hands  
    withhold,  
Rich gifts of raiment or grain or gold ?  
Lo ! I have flung to the East and West  
Priceless treasures torn from my breast ?  
And yielded the sons of my stricken womb  
To the drum beats of duty, the sabres of  
    doom.

Gathered like pearls in their alien graves  
Silent they sleep by the Persian waves,  
Scattered like shells on Egyptian sands,  
They lie with pale brows and brave,  
    broken hands,  
They are strewn like blossoms mown down  
    by chance  
On the blood-brown meadows of Flanders  
    and France.

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Can ye measure the grief of the tears I  
weep

Or compass the woe of the watch I keep?  
Or the pride that thrills thro' my heart's  
despair,

And the hope that comforts the anguish of  
prayer?

And the far sad and glorious vision I see  
Of the torn red banners of Victory?

When the terror and tumult of hate shall  
cease

And life be refashioned on anvils of peace,  
And your love shall offer memorial thanks  
To the comrades who fought in your  
dauntless ranks,

And you honour the deeds of the deathless  
ones

Remember the blood of thy martyred sons!

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## THE PRIVILEGE OF THE YOUNGER GENERATION.

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*The following is the address delivered by Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, on the Anniversary Day of the Andhra Jatheeya Kala Sala, Masulipatam, (1914-1915), with Sir Sankaran Nair in the chair.*

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen, and specially students of this National College,—I cannot tell you how deep to-day is my sense, not merely of pride, but of hope in being present on this occasion ; and while I was sitting here I realised with something like rapture that the service of India can never be a thing of sorrow, but always of a kind that looks forward for to-morrow. Yesterday morning, I was assisting at the Memorial meeting of that great son of India whose death might seem to us to have left India without hope for the future, for in the midst of that mourning we had a feeling of despair that the greatest son of India had departed, and who could take his place ? To-day, sitting here, and looking at these young men, and these



eager faces before me, I realize that though Gokhale has died, his spirit survives and his work will be completed from generation to generation, so long as founders and organisers of institutions like this are in India to inculcate his ideals not merely by precept, but by example. And that is why I say the service of India is always a service of hope, looking forward for the dawn of to-morrow ; and I say it because I know, after hearing the beautiful and heart-stirring report of the Head-master that the ideal of service—of service manifold and co-ordinated and focussed towards one destiny and one purpose,—is here a living lesson from day to day, from hour to hour, not confined to one class, not confined to one creed, not confined specially to one form of intellectual expression and achievement but emphasising every form of expression—intellectual, æsthetic, and artistic which comes out to-day in what is called “national consciousness.” For years now it has been my great privilege to be more and more closely identified with what is known as the younger generation. In almost every great city of India I have come into joyful and intimate comradeship

with the young men who are going to make the history of to-morrow. In the different cities of India I have come closely, and ever more closely, in touch with what is called the "new spirit" in India—with what has justly and aptly been called, the Indian Renaissance.

Two years ago, through an unhappy misfortune of failing health, I went to England, and there for 18 months lived in contact and in comradeship with Young India which there is receiving an impress of national unity in an alien country. For it is England that is the training ground of Indian patriots, for it is on that common ground that most of the young men, young impulsive dreamers of dreams in the present and doers of great deeds in the future, are congregated together, from every province and every village, representing every religion and every race, but representing always the same ideals springing from the most diverse civilisations and the most diverse histories. And there in Oxford and in Cambridge and in Edinburgh, but chiefly in London, where thousands and thousands of young hearts beat to-day as "one India"—there it was that I realized that there

## AROJINI'S SPEECHES AND WRITINGS.

really such a thing as the Indian renaissance. I began, moreover, to realise that there is such a thing as duty, but duty sanctified into a privilege—and that is the privilege of the younger generation, the privilege of united service to the country that shall never again know division in the future. And so you can imagine with what delight I accepted the invitation to address the students of this College on the occasion of their fifth anniversary. But I must also tell you how my delight at the thought of myself—an individual—being given this chance of coming into touch with the young spirits of Masulipatam became deeper when it suddenly dawned upon me that besides a personal bond of sympathy between you and me in ideals there is moreover a historic connection between my capital and yours. It is well-known history that this ancient Hindu centre of Masulipatam was once historically—and has always been in sentiment—associated in friendly relationship towards the premier Muhammadan province of India. This seemed to add new strength to my hopes, new wings to my aspirations, and new force to my message. What is it that I call th

privilege of the younger generation? What is it that I call the sanctity of duty and of service? In one word it means the history of India as it lies in your hands to make it. And the history of the future of Indian culture has been summed up to-day in language of the choicest literature by our Principal when he enunciated that the culture of a nation does not limit itself to mere intellectual and scholastic achievements, but must find infinite forms of expression, as infinite, indeed, as human capacity. And it seems to me that not merely in the ideals of a nation, but in the actual daily measurable working out of these ideals, it can be realised how effectual enthusiasm can be when it is transmitted into the earnestness of service; and nothing has given me greater pleasure on this most delightful afternoon than to have given medals not merely to those who have excelled in studies, but to those who are learning to work with their hands, to recognise the dignity of manual labour, as it should stand side by side with the dignity of scholarship. This, coming from me with traditions of scholarship behind me, should count for something, because it

means that those who in the past considered that self-expression was merely a monopoly of intellectual authority have begun to realise that there are other and various forms of such self-expression. Let me now carry this thought onward and tell you how, as the years go on, when the young spirits of to-day will go out into the world and prove and justify such lessons as have been taught to them in this institution and in other institutions with similar ideals, they will only then begin to realize that to them the only thing that is left is to feel with that young sannyasi in yellow robes (a boy-reciter) who said, "I am Indian! I am Indian! I am Mussalman! I am Christian!" Infinitely better than anything that one can think of is it to repeat the sloka "I am India—I represent the honour of India, I represent the capacity of India, I represent all those ideals which my country must stand for in the eyes of the world—to realize and to justify the past, which made her the supremest sovereign, the greatest teacher of spiritual truth and of intellectual learning in the past." And that, believe me, is not difficult to accomplish; for I do not say that each

one of you individually has all those qualities that make up the sum total of national entity, but that each of you, however little gifted with anything that the world counts supreme, is an indispensable quantity in that great stream of national life which I want you to realize as flowing from the past in unbroken continuity towards the future. Realizing this you will also realise that service is of many forms, that each one of you is called to some special service of his own, some intellectually, some by legitimate gifts to rank and position, some through brains, some through genius that can rouse the sleeping spirit to living action, some through literature, and some through the merest, humblest work, as diggers of the soil, as sweepers, as scavengers, flushing the drains of national life. Believe me that in the eyes of the Mother, service is not more supreme in one form than another, and that what she requires is that whatever we are called upon to do individually that we should do with fulness and dignity. Now what are the many forms of service, which co-ordinated together, will make up the hopeful to-morrow of India. In the past it

used to be considered that a son of a gentleman must not soil his hand or disgrace his ancestry with trade or commerce or industry; but more and more young men are beginning to realize that the dignity of India does not consist merely in having degrees of Oxford and Cambridge or in becoming Lawyers, Doctors or Government servants, but depends also on having that expert knowledge of arts, science, and industry which alone can give back to India her once central place in human civilisation. Only to-day the learned president, in talking to his companions on his journey here, was saying that if he had been twenty years younger he would have not chosen Law for his profession, but he would have used all his brain, time and energy, that have made him such an indomitable personality in public life to the advancement of India in industrial enterprise. Again when you are devoting yourselves to the service of your country you must remember that it is the unity in feeling between the two great races which make up Indian nationality, that forms the dominant fact in the realization of national ideals. Unity and not division is the only

possible basis on which you can build up great national traditions. There is really only one limitation to the definition of Nationality. Your strength must have grown so wide as to have felt the universal thrill of brotherhood that binds the world's races together. You might then come to India as the centre of universal and fundamental brotherhood: and this is the only limitation of the definition of Indian Nationality. To-day the great lesson that I shall carry back to Hyderabad, and that I shall carry always wherever I go is that I have found a living institution teaching the lesson of National unity and the necessity of co-ordinating all forms of national work. To-day it has inspired me to see the carpenter receiving a prize, and the moulder receiving recognition, all for work that is so necessary to the ultimate interests of the country. The great function of an institution such as this is to teach that all work is dignified so long as it is faithfully done. Gentlemen, I think that in the years to come the greatest national festival that will be kept in every part of India will be not the dawn of the New Year, nor merely the feast of Saras-



wati, nor of any of the other great gods and goddesses, but that of our living India, whose temple is in our hearts, who speaks with the same tongue to the child as to the philosopher, to the tiller of the soil as to the poet. We shall keep Her festival, and we shall worship Her as she must be worshipped, in spirit and in truth.

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## AWAKE !

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*The following verses were recited at the Indian National Congress, at Bombay, in December, 1915.*

Waken, O mother! thy children implore  
thee,  
Who kneel in thy presence to serve and  
adore thee !  
The night is aflush with a dream of the  
morrow,  
Why still dost thou sleep in thy bondage  
of sorrow ?  
Awaken and sever the woes that enthrall  
us,  
And hallow our hands for the triumphs  
that call us !

Are we not thine, O Belov'd, to inherit  
The manifold pride and power of thy spirit?  
Ne'er shall we fail thee, forsake thee or  
falter,  
Whose hearts are thy home and thy shield  
and thine altar,

SAROJINI'S SPEECHES AND WRITINGS.

Lo! we would thrill the high stars with  
thy story,  
And set thee again in the forefront of  
glory.

Hindus :—Mother ! the flowers of our wor-  
ship have crowned thee !

Parsees :—Mother ! the flame of our hope  
shall surround thee !

Mussulmans :—Mother ! the sword of our  
love shall defend thee !

Christians :—Mother ! the song of our faith  
shall attend thee !

All Creeds :—Shall not our dauntless devo-  
tion avail thee ? Hearken ! O queen and  
O goddess, we hail thee !

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## WOMEN IN NATIONAL LIFE.

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*Mrs. Sarojini Naidu in proposing the Resolution on the above subject in the Indian National Social Conference held at Bombay in December, 30, 1915, said:—*

President, Brother-Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,—This resolution that I have to propose, although it came third on the list of resolutions had to be changed for my personal convenience; it is a happy thought to have put it first because it embodies a resolution that deals with the most important problems of our social progress, and that is the education of our women. As I was listening to that inspiring and stirring address by our revered President a little while ago, it seemed to me that no woman could have pleaded the cause of women with a greater conviction of her rights and her privileges and her destiny in the future as an unbroken historic tradition from the past; and whatever I might say speaking as a woman, and an Indian woman, for my sisters, cannot possibly carry the same

weight with you, because it will not go from me with that tradition of sacrifice, that living reality of daily service in the cause of women which Prof. Karve has embodied in his life. But when I look around me to-day and consider that 10 years ago in Calcutta from the platform of the Social Conference I pleaded for the education of women, there was not a gathering of women quite as much as the gathering present here to-day, and that itself is sufficient to prove that within the last 10 years not only the men, but those more intimately and essentially concerned, the women themselves, have begun to realise the cause of a new spirit which is nothing but a renaissance of the old spirit which gave to India those Gargis, Maitrayis, those Savitris and Sitas of whom Mr. Bhupendra Nath Basu spoke a little while ago. And if I speak to you to-day in favour and in support of this educational policy for our women, for a more liberal grant from the authorities, for more co-operation from our men, I will demand from my sisters not merely that liberality of endowment that we ask from Government, not merely the

co-operation from our brothers, but from them their pledge of individual and personal consecration to this great cause; I will demand from every sister of mine her personal dedication to this cause, because it is not from Government or even from the co-operation of the manhood of the country that the solution of this question will come. It is not from them that you will get the impetus to wipe off the stain from our national history, but rather from the womanhood of India which is suffering from a wrong. My reproach is to the women of India in India, and though I make it in their presence I do it as a woman speaking to women, and do it with the fullest realisation of what I am saying because I feel the voices of millions of my sons crying out from one end to another end. Let the womanhood of the country wake and work. Let us strengthen the hands of our men. Those prayers that we prayed, those thoughts that we uttered in the thousands gathered together year after year, passing resolutions, are but the sincerest desire of every member of the society that has the interest of the country. When I was in Europe

a. little more than a year ago, after 15 years of absence from the continent of progress, during my last visit to Europe, what struck me in that great continent of rapid changes, of evolution going on at a rate that one can hardly calculate by the hands of a clock, that it was the womanhood of Europe that had begun to realise the full measure of its strength, the full height of its responsibility, the full sanctity and seriousness of its duty in the nation building of Europe. Everywhere I found that women of all classes that had been considered luxury-loving had become transmuted into servers of the country's good. Women, whose chief assets 15 years ago might have been the jewels or the ornaments, had for their asset now that living sympathy, that personal service to the poor, that share of responsibility in solving the great problems of the generation, every nation is called upon to solve. And when I came back to India a year ago the first thing that struck me after nearly two years of absence was that the womanhood of India was beginning to wake in an unmistakable way. I have come in contact with

thousands and thousands of women in every part of India and the same message comes forth that unity of Indian Womanhood, if it is desired to achieve it, is to be found in the national service. When I was in the Krishna-Godawari District it surprised me to find how in that country where there is a new movement to re-establish a national consciousness, how the women of that country stood side by side with their men in every detail, and not merely in the abstract ideals of achieving that regeneration, that renaissance of the Andhra country. Everywhere I found that wherever there was a school to be started or a mission for social service, wherever there was a movement to bring back to the Indian consciousness that sense of national dignity, that sense of national responsibility, the women of the Andhra country stood side by side with their men. In Bengal, I found in that sweet country, where the very educational ardour is transmuted in devotion for the country, there I found man and woman ready to bring his or her life like a lotus flower in consecration to the feet of *Bharat varsha*. In this Presidency where every community is



represented not in minorities but in equal proportions of strength and of prosperity, where there is that wholesome stimulus for every good work, I find the spirit of the womanhood of this Presidency, the women of the Maharashtra, the women of the Zoroastrian community and the women who say *Yah Allah, Yah Allah* of Mahomedanism, though they are divided by race and creed and religion, they are yet indivisible, one by the realisation of their common womanhood, and they are one by the consciousness of their common duty which is the duty of every woman whose destiny it is to create the generation of the citizens of to-morrow, and if this resolution comes into a Conference like this it comes with a whole-hearted support of this great gathering of women who, though great with their numbers are still only a fraction of that large majority who are thinking and desiring and hoping and struggling to bring back to India that dignity, that liberty, that deliverance from evil, that freedom of all social laws which comes of education. They are trying here, as elsewhere, as all true women must, to realise that their

share in co-operating with their men is the only condition of national regeneration. They are beginning to realise that it is not only by having large ideals that this service is to be achieved but rather by analysing those great ideals into their component practical parts, and every one taking up a little share of practical service, and all those ideals and all those visions of to-morrow are centred round this supreme question of the education of women. Other national questions come and go. They are the result of the changing time spirit, but the one question that has never changed since the beginning of time itself, and life itself, the duty of womanhood, the influence of womanhood, the sanctity of womanhood, the simple womanhood as the divinity of God upon earth, the responsibility of womanhood in shaping the divinity into daily life. Friends, two nights ago I was speaking in Poona at the All-India Mahomedan Educational Conference, and I was the one representative of my sect in the midst of hundreds of Mahomedan men, and I was asked to thank on behalf of those women who are separated from their men, not merely by

virtue of sect, but rather divided from them by the tradition and custom. It was I who said, (Oh Men, unless and until you give to your women all those equal privileges that form the highest and noblest teaching of your great nation-builder and Prophet, you will not attain that regeneration of your race that renaissance of Islamic glory, and to-day in the presence of this great gathering chiefly of Hindus, I say, oh friends, oh brothers, oh sisters, look back to the past and look forward to the future, and let your future draw its diffused inspiration, its highest vitality, just from those living traditions that are our greatest inheritance. (We ask for nothing that is foreign to our ideals, rather we ask for a restoration of those rights, the rights that are the immortal treasures. We ask only that we may be given that chance to develop our body and spirit and mind in that evolution that will re-establish for you ideal womanhood, not an impossible womanhood such as poets may dream of, but an ideal womanhood that will make noble wives who are helpmates, strong mothers, brave mothers, teaching their sons their first lesson of national service.)

## ADDRESS TO HINDU LADIES.

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*The 22nd Annual Social gathering of the Hindu Ladies' Social and Literary Club was held at the Chanda Ramji Hindu Girls' High School in Bombay on Sunday the 16th January, 1916. Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, who presided on the occasion, said:—*

Ladies—I think it is a real privilege to preside at this meeting. I have great respect and reverence for the founder of this Club. During the last twenty-two years this Club has done much useful work and has passed through many changes. In the normal life of a human being we know well what sufferings and changes happen during such a long period and what is true in the case of a human being is true of an institution. Knowing our social conditions and traditions—and we are suffering for centuries—you will know what determination must have been necessary for the founders of this club in its early days. When I was in Poona my friend, Mrs. Ramabai Ranade told me through what trying circumstances the Club passed its early days. The most

endearing work of her husband, the late Mr. Justice Mahadev Govind Ranade, who founded this Institution was to serve the cause of womanhood. Mr. Ranade believed that unless women took their responsible share in political life, India will never realise its goal. This Club has inaugurated a new era in the life of social progress. It cannot be denied that this Institution has taken many expressions. Not only the mental qualities are fostered but the artistic too. Every quality that is elevating to a woman is encouraged and every opportunity is given for its development. I spent three weeks in Bombay and have learnt many lessons of life. Many important movements are taking place daily in Bombay, yet it is a question whether anything solid is done towards progress. Fashions in dress and other matters are set and are newly coming ; but the fundamental question of the cause of womanhood has remained. The real test of nationhood is the woman. If the woman has taken her proper place in the society then the central problem is solved. The goal of society depends upon the unit of the woman. In India this problem can be solved by bringing

upon the woman the sense of responsibility and impressing upon her the divinity and the conscientiousness, of her power and work of motherhood. The work of nation-building must begin from the woman unit. It should be brought to the mind of an Indian woman that she is not a toy, nor a chattel, nor an instrument of pleasure or amusement, but the inspirer of the spirit.) Why are the names of Sita, Savitri and Damayanti so sacred and commonplace in every household and the cause of inspiration? What were the qualities that made them so great? They had no stupidity, quarrelsomeness, idleness, timidity, and so on. Damayanti had no terror of death though she was separated from her husband. It was spiritual understanding and intellectual development that made them great. When women lost their self-reverence, degeneration came in. It is said in our Sastras "Where women are respected there the Goddesses are pleased." So also it is said by a sage, "One who conquers his spirit is greater than the king who builds a city." So spiritual development is the thing that is required. (No one can be greater than a good woman; sisterhood of woman

is a nation-building work ; so also co-operation and help to suffering humanity are nation-building works, and these works have been undertaken nobly and humbly by the members of this Club. ) Now the time has come to recognise the sisterhood of women of all religions and nations. Women are not so different from one another as man is from another man. Women may form a sisterhood more easily because they are bound to every woman in the world by the common divine quality of motherhood. We must remember that one individual may not do great things alone but by unity in this Club we may do service to all. I see before me women of all kinds, Deccan, Gujarati, Christian and Muham-madan assembled together in this hall indicating the unity of sex, the sisterhood of woman.

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## THE ARMS ACT.

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*Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, who was asked by the President, to speak on the Resolution on the " Arms Act " at the Lucknow Congress of 1916, said :—*

Your Honour, President and unarmed citizens of India,—It may seem a kind of paradox that I should be asked to raise my voice on behalf of the disinherited manhood of the country, but it is suitable that I who represent the other sex, that is, the mothers of the men whom we wish to make men and not emasculated machines, should raise a voice on behalf of the future mothers of India to demand that the birth-right of their sons should be given back to them, so that to-morrow's India may be once more worthy of its yesterday, that their much-valued birthright be restored to the Hindus and Mussalmans of India, to the disinherited martial Rajput and the Sikh and the Pathan. The refusal of the privilege, that gifted privilege and inalienable right to carry arms, is to insult the very core of their valiant manhood. To



prevent to-day millions of brave young men willing to carry arms in the cause of the Empire is to cast a slur on the very ideals of the Empire. (*Hear, hear.*) In your name, O citizens of India, I appeal to the representative of the great Emperor of this great Indian Empire to plead for our rights, to support us in our claims, to grant to the children of to-morrow the right that their forefathers of yesterday possessed. (*Cheers.*) Who but a woman shall raise a voice for you who have not been able in all these years to speak for yourselves with any effect. (*Cries of 'Shame'.*) I come from a city where every man is privileged to carry arms—the Africian, the Rohilla, and the Sikh do carry arms there—and never has it been said in my city of Hyderabad that all these various armed elements have ever been disloyal to the sovereign power. Shall not the greater portion of India, British India, take a lesson from that one native state that knows how to trust the loyalty of its subjects. (*Hear, hear.*) Have we not, the women of India, sent our sons and brothers to shed their blood on the battlefields of Flanders, France, Gallipoli and Mesopotamia? When the hour comes

for thanks, shall we not say to them for whom they fought 'when the terror and tumult of hate shall cease and life is refashioned, and when there is peace, and you offer memorial thanks to the comrades that fought in the dauntless ranks, and you honour the deeds of deathless ones,' remember the blood of martyred sons, and remember the armies of India and restore to India her lost manhood. (*Loud cheers*).

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## SPEECH AT THE MOSLEM LEAGUE.

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*Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, at the request of the President on behalf of the delegates, in supporting the Resolution on "Self-Government" at the Conference of the All-India Moslem League at Lucknow, in December, 1916, said :—*

I do not know what claim I have to stand before you to-day except that I have been for many years a faithful comrade of the young generation of the Mussalmans and champion of the Women of the Muslim community and fought with their men-folk for the privilege that Islam gave long ago but which you denied to your women-folk. I stand before you to-day to support this great cause of Self-Government for India. I remember the occasion nearly four years ago, that historic occasion on which the young generation of Islam passed a new constitution and brought within the range of practical politics to be realised by effective measures and co-operation with the Hindu community this great dream—it

seemed far off dream—Self-Government or the Government of the people by the people, the investment of power into the hands of the people. On this occasion as I look around me I miss two friends who were sincere friends of this ideal of Self-Government. One is the late Pandit Bishan Narayan Dhar. I also miss to-day with intense and passionate sense of loss the magnetic presence of my friend and your great leader, Muhamad Ali. (*Loud applause.*) I should like also to mention the valuable services rendered to your community by Wazir Hasan the tireless Secretary of your League. One who was keen as a distinguished visitor and a sympathetic critic four years ago, is to-day guiding the deliberations of your League for the greater glory of India. In the Hon. Mr. Jinnah you have a President who stands as a focus between Hindus and Mussalmans and it is so because Muhamad Ali persuaded him to become a member of the League. During the last few days we have been suffused with enthusiasm, and the most enthusiastic response of the united people has been given to the Indian Nation in their demand for Self-Government. We all recognise

this indomitable determination to go up with the demand for Self-Government; and the scheme the Post-War Reforms would not have been possible but for the fact that we millions in India speak with one voice, because we are one, undivided and indivisible whole. I am not a politician. I spoke to you as a lover of my country and I charge you, Mussalmans of India, to remember the high responsibilities of your desires. No one can give to you what you do not have capacity to take.

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## THE VISION OF PATRIOTISM.

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*Mrs. Sarojini Naidu delivered a public address on Monday the 15th January, 1917, in the compound of the "Leader" office. The Hon. Pandit Motilal Nehru presided. There was a very large gathering of ladies and gentlemen of the station, European and Indian. After the chairman briefly introduced the lecturer, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu said:—*

Mr. President, ladies and the citizens of Allahabad,—Do you not think it is enough to cow the boldest heart to silence, to see so many thousands of people gathered together in the expectation of hearing an oration which it is not within the limitations of my gift to offer? I trust since my voice has been overworked in your province, you will extend to me, to the very end of my speech, that courtesy of perfect stillness, because, though I may share the enthusiasm of the great patriot, Surendranath Banerjea, I have not been gifted with his voice. In your great province,

gentlemen, during these past few weeks, it has been my great privilege to go from centre to centre; and one thing that has struck me as it must strike every student of the national awakening, is how real is this awakening in your midst, in the very heart of what your critics have called the sleeping, dreaming province of India. Whether one goes to the spiritual centre of the United Provinces where the Ganges sings her immemorial song of love and absolution, or whether one goes to the modern industrial capital of Cawnpore, or whether one goes to Lucknow that still keeps the memories of her royal dynasties, or whether one goes to modern Aligarh with a new life of Islamic Renaissance, one is compelled to understand that no longer is it true that India is asleep, that the voice of the future has not begun to call to the present; one is compelled to understand that there is something to-day levelling the life of the nation, levelling the entire people, from those who are the followers of Sanatana Dharma to those who are dissenters of the Arya Samaj, from those who go by the letter of the Koranic texts to those who put the widest Interpretation

of life on the great democratic ideals of the Prophet of Arabia. And when one comes to Allahabad one is only confirmed in this conviction that India is awakened to-day, and the awakening has not merely kindled the hearts of the young generation but the heart of the older generation has got re-kindled from that immortal torch that we call the fire of patriotism. In Allahabad to-day, as many centuries ago, we find pilgrims streaming upon the banks of the two great rivers that stand to-day as ages ago as the symbol of unity. We know that in ages gone by every province of India sent to this great focus of union these two life-giving and sin-pardoning rivers, their pilgrims. We know too that this city stands to us of the Hindu race as the sacred land where the Ramayan had its centre, its citadel when Rama met Bharata on the banks of the Ganges and we of modern India have our own personal admiration of the sanctities connected with the river because the sacred ashes of Gopal Krishna Gokhale have been sent here and those ashes of the Servant of India have been scattered on the rivers united standing for



ever as a bond between yesterday and to-day and to-morrow.

Gentlemen, what shall I speak to you about to-day, you whose hearts are throbbing with that burning love that is called the love of the country? What can a mere poet, a mere woman talk to you about that you gentlemen know? From my ignorance what shall I teach to your experience? From my weakness what shall I offer to your strength? Only the dreams of a poet, only the prayers of a woman that night after night and morning after morning are offered to that temple of the great Bharata Mata.

*The lecturer, after quoting Shelley's lines describing the spring season, proceeded:—*

If I speak to you to-night it will not be as a politician, since, I say it over and over again, my woman's intelligence cannot grapple with the transcendent details of politics. I only understand the great abiding principles of patriotism which impelled each generation to give its own contribution of loving service to the great Motherland, in upholding the honour of the Motherland and in adding to the pleasure of the Motherland. In spring-time when

the blossoms break open, when the Bulbuls sing, oh, what is it that comes to a poet as it comes to the heart of you all? It is the vision of a life different. Memory does not belong to the spring time, but to the autumnal days. Spring time brings back to the heart the vision of a new awakening of hope, a new vision of to-morrow, because the blossoms of the spring hold the pledges of harvest; and so the message of the spring that comes to the heart of a nation must hold prophecy of a harvest of great deeds which are the only logical outcome of the spring time of great dreams. It is to one of the recognized leaders whom no one suspects of poetry that I owe the inspiration of the phrase that I will use to-day as the text and burden of my address to you. Two years ago it was my friend, and I am proud to say in one sense my comrade and leader, Mr. Mahomed Ali Jinnah, who in addressing students in Bombay said that there were three visions that come to every man in his lifetime and it was in the following and fulfilment of these visions that every soul found its harmonious development—the vision of Love, the vision of Religion and the vision

of Patriotism. I will speak to you on these three great visions that have come to most of the passing generation as they must come to you who belong to the generation that stands upon the threshold of destiny. The vision of love, the vision of religion and the vision of patriotism are the three visions that make of a brute a man and of a man a god.

Take the history of the world as we know it and see how the vision of love, working and working and working in the hearts of ages has built up a great religion, a great literature, has inspired great wars has caused great victories, has made defeat worth-while because all was well lost. To what do we owe our great stories that thrill the heart of every Hindu, man and woman, excepting that vision of love that found its pious embodiment in the virtues, in the sacrifices, in the invincible courage of those heroines of our scriptures, those household words, those dreams of poet's imagination, those embodiments of the nation's ideals, that greatest Sita, that unconquerable Savitri, that faithful Damayanti and that Sakuntala who made her name famous in far off

Germany ? All these dreams are dreams of poets who behold the vision of love. Take our Rajput history. What is the one thrilling inspiration of the Rajput period excepting the honour of Padmini, which was the vindication of love ?

*Coming to the vision of Religion, Mrs. Naidu continued:*

What was it that swept those temples ; those immemorial temples on the banks of the immemorial river, save the aspirations of men to reach the divine, no matter through what agony, and sacrifice and through what suffering and despair ? In the case of the crusades of Palestine it was the vision of religion that made practical service possible. In India they need not be told what the vision of faith had done in building their civilization. Religion at its best had given the Hindu civilization that immutable quality of spiritual vitality that had made India survive all dynasties.

As the logical sequence from that personal human vision of love and that personal spiritual vision of faith must come the highest of all visions, the vision of Patriotism and that is a word, I think,

that must find an echo in your hearts whether you have consciously or unconsciously accepted or rejected the vision of love and the vision of faith. I don't think there is one in your midst to-day that has not longed for and prayed for that vision of Patriotism which alone makes a man or woman worthy to be the child of this great Motherland. (*Applause.*) And so from that personal limited vision of experience that I have spoken of, I will pass to this vision of patriotism which is a communal vision, not an individual vision. Many amongst you have temperaments that may or may not realize, may or may not accept, may or may not benefit by the personal intensities of those individual emotions, but I believe that we in India, whether Hindus or Mahomedans, are all being consecrated in that crucible that destroys all that is mean, and we have that crucible alone to be re-shaped as vessels to pour the divine essence of love for India. And so all of us present here to-day are taking that communion together from a great living cup that time has shaped for us, a living cup that bears on its sides, on its golden surface not merely the design of the Totus that

is the sacred symbol of the Hindus, but I see on the three other sides of that cup other symbols belonging to the other children of Bharata Mata. I see on one side the Crescent, on a second side, the Alhilal, on the third side the image of that torch that has never gone out since the exiles from Persia carried it in triumph and brought it to these shores. And on the fourth side, gentlemen, since I am a visionary, I see visions, I see the Cross that has stood for two thousand years as the symbol of the servants of Him who being a man taught the lesson of love from the mountain top and said to the disciples, 'It's I, be not afraid.' That is a vision that appeals to me.

*Proceeding she said :—*

So this cup has been filled and the waters of salvation have been poured in it, and it is for us who are the communicants of this great vision of Patriotism, to put our united lips and drink pledging to one another a loyalty that chance may not withdraw, a love that no outside dissentient can destroy, a faith that no difficulty can daunt, a hope so radiant that no cloud can eclipse it. These are the virtues that we of the

different communities, co-sharers of this great vision of Patriotism, co-trustees of the responsibilities of this great vision, must pledge to one another. You know the time has come—it came, indeed, long ago but we were too asleep to realize that it has come. It is not often that the psychological moment comes, and when it goes nothing can bring it back. So has been the experience of the world.

*Mrs. Naidu then alluded to the past days of resentment and hatred among the different communities in the country and went on :—*

To-day the clean page is ready before us washed with our tears and to be smeared with the blood of our sacrifice and devotion. The legend is of four-fold love, not of two-fold love. We are too apt to think that the legend of India is only the *sangam* of the Ganges and the Jumna. There are other rivers, though they may appear small in comparison to the great rivers, that must unite, there are tributaries, gentlemen, there are other rivers, and something greater than the Tribeni is to be before the river of love which will flow towards the sea of glory—that river of life that is called the river of United India. (*Hear, hear, and*

*applause*.) That is the vision of Patriotism as I conceive it, as I dream of it. I know it would exist. Exist when? When you decide that you are ready, when you say to yourselves: 'No more divisions, no more tyranny of communities, no more insistence on separate races, but rather an ultimatum issued to the world that we are one nation.' (*Applause*). Gentlemen,—I will not say, gentlemen, for the term<sup>1</sup> has grown effete—men of India, I will say, it is, as I say, for you to decide whether to-day or a century hence the world will see the great spectacle of all those divided streams united into a focus of that national prosperity which will bring India once more her birth-right which you have sold for a mess of pottage. (*Cries of shame*.) Do you think—though it is a commonplace for all politicians to say—that you have been disintegrated because outsiders came to conquer you? Who can conquer the soul within? Who can destroy the invincible spirit of man? Who can fetter your spirit if that spirit refuses to be fettered? Who but yourselves say 'We cannot govern ourselves?' Who but yourselves have forged your fetters? Who but yourselves have built your prison walls?



Who but yourselves have bound your eyes with bandages? Who are robbing you of the birthright of your inborn sense but you? Who are discounting the possibilities of the future but you? Gentlemen, men of India, I speak to you as one of yourselves. I share your shame because of the tyranny of the past.

*Mrs. Sarojini Naidu asked the audience to wipe out all the evils and give themselves their birth-right of liberty which no one could withhold from them.*

It is not a gift that comes from outside. Even high gods cannot make of a slave a free man if his heart does not burn with the hunger for freedom. The vision of love, the vision of religion, and the vision of patriotism—to me these three things have all been one. I do not know, I think there are many of you who do not know also a human love that can compare with the love that one gives to the Motherland. I think the most devout Hindu of you, the most loyal Mussalman of you, cannot know of a religion more sacred and more uplifting than the worship that one brings to the feet of the mother. Patriotism. What is patriotism? It is the combined vision o

love and of religion. It is a vision made reality. It is a dream that has passed into love, it is a love that has passed into service, it is a worship that becomes the ladder that brings to fulfilment that great vision, the third vision, the final vision, the glorious vision. Is there any amongst you who going home to-night will say to yourselves, when you sit among your comrades, or your kinsfolk, and later in the stillness of the night—will you not say:—"Has God given to me a greater destiny than this that I become the standard-bearer of my country's honour, that I become the soldier of her cause, the champion of her weak, the defender of her glory, the creator of her regenerated power among the nations of the world." Do you think it a light responsibility, you the inheritors of the Vedas? Do you think, you my Mussalman brethren, a light responsibility to be the trustees of those great ideals of brotherhood that your prophet gave years ago? No; the India of to-day requires not merely what the Vedas taught you, it requires not only those democratic ideals that make the glory of Islam, but it requires the further fulfilment of this great

vision of patriotism, the combination of the great spiritual mysticism of the Hindus with the dynamic power of action which is the birthright of the Mussalmans and it requires all the united gifts of her children who will focus the national vision of patriotism. Divided, there is no complete vision. Each community can only see from one angle. And what is a mere angle of vision even though it be changed? (*Laughter*). It is the combined vision of all communities that will make a true focus of national vision and it is the national vision that means the regeneration of a country.

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## INDENTURED LABOUR.

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*At the meeting on Indenture Labour, held at Allahabad, on the 19th January, 1917, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu delivered the following speech :—*

Citizens of India, I think we represent almost every province here to-night. The words that you have heard from the previous speakers must have made your hearts bleed. Let the blood of your hearts blot out the shame that your women have suffered abroad. The words that you have heard to-night must have kindled within you a raging fire. Men of India, let that be the funeral pyre of the indenture system. (*Applause.*) Words from me to-night ! No, tears from me to-night, because I am a woman, and though you may feel the dishonour that is offered to your mothers and sisters, I feel the dishonour offered to me in the dishonour to my sex. I have travelled far, gentlemen, to come to you to-night only to raise my voice, not for the men, but for women, for those women

whose proudest memory is that Sita would not stand the challenge to her honour but called upon mother earth to avenge her and the earth opened up to avenge her. I come to speak on behalf of those women whose proudest memory lies in this, that Padmini of Chittore preferred the funeral pyre to dishonour. I come to speak on behalf of those women who, like Savitri, have followed their men to the gates of death and have won back, by their indomitable love, the dehumanised soul of their men in the colonies abroad. I come to speak to you in the name of one woman who has summed up in her frail body all the physical sufferings the women of India have endured abroad—in the broken body, the shattered health, of Mrs. Gandhi. (*Applause*) I ask you to witness the suffering, the starvation and the indignities that have been suffered by the women because they loved their men and their men suffered for a cause. These women shared with their husbands the martyrdom and the personal sorrow rather than prefer their own comfort while their men suffered for the sake of national honour and self-respect. I ask you in the name of that murdered sister,

that sister whom Mr. Andrews told us, that found in death the only deliverance from dishonour. I ask you in the names of those two brothers who preferred to save the honour of their family and the religion in the blood of their sister rather than let her chastity be polluted.

#### NATIONAL HONOUR.

Do you think—you who are clamouring for self-government to-day—do you think, you who are dreaming dreams of territorial patriotism, you are patriots if you cannot stop the agony that is sending its echoes to you night and day—night and day from those men who are in no way better than dogs, from those women who are growing worse than brutes? Self-Government shriek—for whom? And for what? For men whose hands are folded while their women shriek, whose voices are silent even in the face of the most terrible insult that can be offered to man? Wealth! What is wealth to us? What is power to us? What is glory to us? How shall the wealth and power and glory of a nation be founded save on the immutable honour of its womanhood? Are we going to leave to posterity a wealth got with dishonour

Are we going to leave to the unborn generations a sorrow and shame that we have not been able to wipe out? Men of India, rather the hour of doom struck than that after to-night you should live to say: 'We heard the cries and yet we were deaf. We heard the call for help, but we had not the courage. We felt in our hearts the challenge to our national honour and yet we were cowards kept still for fear of punishment that might be given.' If after to-night, men of India, if after to-night, I say, it is possible for the most selfish interests to use the humanity of India to enrich, almost as a manure, the sugar plantations of the colonies, if it is possible, I say, to let the forces of the greatest evil on earth to daunt you in this campaign, you are not only unworthy and degenerate sons of our mother whose name stood for glory in the past, but we are the murderers, the suicides of national honour and national progress. You discount the future, nay, you slay the future. There can be no future for a nation whose present men and women do not know how to avenge their dishonour. Does it matter that you, as one of the speakers said, could sleep in

your beds, with the thought that your daughters are safe, that your wives are safe and that your mothers are set upon a pedestal? Are not those wives and mothers, are not those virgins that might have been honoured mothers, citizens of India? What are they gentlemen? What are they but the refuse that even fire will not care to burn? I have come to-day to speak, but I think the fire within me is so strong that it bids me be silent, because words are so weak. I feel within me to-day the anguish that has been from year to year the lot of those women who had better be dead. I feel within me the shame, the inexpressible, the immeasurable, the inalienable shame, gentlemen, that has been the curse of this indenture system of labour. And who are responsible men of India, for this that our men should go abroad for bread? Why is not your patriotism sufficient to have resources enough to give bread to them who go to seek bread abroad? Why is not your patriotism so vigilant, so strong and so all-comprehensive that you are able to guard the ignorance of them, that go abroad, not merely to death—for death, gentlemen, is



tolerable—but dishonour which it is not within the province of self-respecting manhood to endure. Ours has been the shame, because ours has always been the responsibility, but we were asleep or we were dreaming of academic powers, we were discussing from platforms the possibilities in the future, but we were not awake to the degradation of the present. Therefore the shame is ours in a measure that can never be wholly wiped out either by our tears or by the blood of those who have endured the dishonour for the sake of material profit and wealth. So, to-night if our patriotism means more than the curiosity to come by thousands to hear a few speakers, if it means more than the hysteria of the moment, if it means more than the impulse to pity, then I charge you, men of India—I do not appeal to you, I charge you, I lay upon you this trust, I entrust you with this burden, on behalf of those suffering women, on behalf of every woman in this audience, on behalf of every woman from the Punjab to Malabar, I entrust you with this mission, to wipe out the dishonour that lies on our name. It is we who suffer, gentlemen, not those degraded

people—it is the honour of the women in your homes who cannot show their faces. That mark of crime is written here on us because we have no destiny apart from our sisters. Our honour is indivisible, so must be our dishonour. That is, our destiny is one, and whether for glory or for shame, we share alike. And we women who give our sons to the country, we cannot endure our sons to think that their mothers belong to a generation part of whose womanhood was dishonoured.

“WHEN A NATION GROWS BITTER.”

Have I not said enough to stir your blood? Have I not said enough to kindle within you such a conflagration that must not merely annihilate the wrongs of the indenture system but recreate in the crucible a new stirring, a new purpose, a new unity of self-respect that will not sleep, that will not rest, that will be a sword to avenge, that will be a fire to burn, it will be the trumpet call to liberty that only comes when a nation grows bitter, that only comes when a nation says, ‘the health within me is rotten.’ It is the bitterness that comes when we hear these wrongs abroad. It is

the bitterness that comes when we feel that we have let ourselves sleep. It is when we have that indignation against the wrong-doer abroad and the wrong-doer in our homes that we shall be able to see that we have felt the spirit of Sri Krishna reborn within ourselves for re-establishing our national righteousness. Is national righteousness possible when the chastity of your womanhood is assailed? Is national righteousness possible when the men of India sit still and see such crimes? Is national righteousness possible till every man amongst you becomes a soldier of the cause, a devotee, a fanatic, everything and anything which means destruction of the wrong and triumph of the right. Gentlemen, it is a stormy sea that we have to cross, a storm-tossed sea in a crowded boat that may or may not stand the burden of our sorrow, but like Khusru of old shall we not say, even when the night is dark, when the waves are high, when there is a rush in the boat, when there is no pilot with us, shall we not say—

*Nakhuda dar kashteeay ma gar na  
bashad gu ma bash.*

*Makhuda dareem ma ra nakhuda dar-  
kar nest.*

What though there be no pilot to our  
boat ? Go, tell him, we need him not. God  
is with us, and we need no pilot.

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## HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY.

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*At a public meeting held at Patna, on Saturday 13th October, 1917, under the auspices of the Patna City Students' Association, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu delivered a lecture on "Hindu-Muslim Unity." There was a large gathering of both Hindus and Mahomedans. The Honb'ble Rai Bahadur Krishna Sahay was in the chair. The chairman having said a few words about the lecturer, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu delivered the following speech :—*

President and Brothers, Hindus and Mussalmans,—I feel to-day a peculiar sense of responsibility such as I have never felt before when dealing with a subject so intimately bound up with my life strings that I almost hesitate in trying to find words that might be wise enough to suit this occasion in this province at this juncture. When I arrived here a few moments ago, it seemed to me, as I mounted this platform so close to the sacred river flowing beneath, that I got

the keynote of what should be my message to you to-day. (*Applause.*) Centuries ago when the first Islamic army came to India, they pitched their caravans on the banks of the sacred Ganges and tempered and cooled their swords in the sacred waters. It was the baptism of the Ganges that gave the first welcome to the Islamic invaders that became the children of India as generations went by. And to-day, in speaking of the Hindu-Moslem Unity, we should bear in mind that historic circumstance, that historic culture, that historic evolution for which the Gangetic valley has stood in bringing about the Hindu-Muslim relationship age after age, and so I trust you will pardon me if I fail, out of my own limited powers, to define the conditions that to-day might strain your hearts. I seek inspiration from that river which has stood always to the Hindus as the spiritual life that gives wisdom in this life and absolution after death. (*Applause.*) To-day we are confronted with a very critical moment in our national history—what might be and what I trust is merely a passing episode. But it appears to our mind to have assumed a significance

that is too great for the people concerned with the future of India to feel lightly about and to permit it to be misconstrued and misrepresented as to cause cleavage between the two communities. Gentlemen, it is, perhaps, very indiscreet for a mere stranger like me within this province to speak of difficulties, momentary difficulties, that are peculiarly local; and yet the day has come within our history when nothing that happens to disturb the tranquillity and harmony between the two races can be called local, because there is no province whose life is separated from the life (*ap-  
plause*) and suffering of any other part of India. Therefore you will permit me to consider myself for the moment while I am the guest within this city as one of yourselves. I wish to invoke in your hearts the sense of anxiety, a sense of responsibility that nothing should come to disturb the future harmony of Behar, the fair progress of the Behari people, who have always stood for peace and good-will in the past and whose united hearts should not be cut asunder. It used to be the boast of Behar that there was no Hindu-Muslim problem in this province and I have heard over and

over again of tributes paid by the leaders of other provinces, saying that when the national sky was overcast with doubt and despair, Behar stood kindling the torch of love and union. There was no Hindu-Muslim problem, but only the shining prescience of a hopeful unity that was real and not merely born of any political exigencies. Then, shall we for the moment allow that fair record to be stained. Shall we, because ignorance brings cleavage, let that record to be stained to bitterness among those who should know better, who should think better to confound that all differences are merely temporary illusions, that the reality cannot be broken and that where knowledge comes the understanding of love must also come? It is only because we are ignorant that we are divided and it is the sacred mission of enlightenment to bring not the lesson of quarrel but the lesson of peace. (*Hear, hear*). That is the problem with which we have to deal to-day. For what is the Hindu-Muslim Unity! We hear it spoken of vigorously, we hear it spoken of unceasingly, we hear it spoken of passionately. But have we defined to ourselves its practical issues? What is



the meaning, what is the significance of the Hindu-Moslem Unity? There is so much misconception abroad that if a Muslim shows sympathy towards a Hindu, he becomes a traitor and if a Hindu shows sympathy towards a Mussalman he becomes an outcast. But what is the reason of this mistrust of those who stand as links between the two races? Nothing save our misreading of the entire purpose of national history. The problem of the Hindu-Muslim Unity stands like this: There are in India two communities (I will not not say two races), two communities that are separated by what they consider the difference of creeds. But when you come to analyse this difference of creed you begin to find that after all, fundamentally, the teaching that came in the wake of the Muslim conquerors was the same as the teaching that arose in the great hymns in the sacred mountain regions of the Himalayas and on the sacred Ganges five thousand years ago. It means essentially the love of truth, the love of purity, the services of humanity, the search for wisdom, the great lessons of self-sacrifice, the worship of the same Transcendent Spirit, no matter whether in

one language it was called Allah and in another Parmeswar. (*applause*). After all what is this antagonism between creed and creed? Antagonism is merely the asset of the ignorant. They are not the weapons of the wise, (*hear, hear*) who realise that after all it is only the misunderstanding of the essential truth wherein lies the difficulty in launching across that golden bridge of sympathy that brings together the two great communities whose fundamental teaching is the love of God and the service of men. And then in this great country the Moslems came to make their home not to carry spoils and to go back to their own home but to build permanently here their home and create a new generation for the enrichment of the Motherland. How can they live separate from the people of the soil? Does history say that in the past they have so lived separate? Or rather it says that once having chosen to take up their abode in this land they became the children of the soil, the very flesh of our flesh and blood of our blood. Gentlemen, history has said that the foreign emperors sought not to divide and rule, but to unite the people and

so build an imperishable guarantee of their own power and administration. (*Loud cheers.*) It may not be strange to you when you look back and see what were the chief characteristics of the Mughal Rule. Not that the Hindus were kept at arms length, but that the Emperor Akbar took his son to Rajputana, so that the blood of the conqueror and the blood of the conquered were mixed to create a new generation of Indians in India. That was the marital union between the Mussalmans and the Hindus. Do not for a moment misunderstand this. I have quoted this symbolically as typical of what should be the kinship between the two great communities in this land. Keep your separate entities, keep your separate creed, but bring to the federated India the culture of centuries to enrich with all those contributions that each has to make for the sum total, for the healthful growth of the national progress. Who says that we want in India marriage between the Hindus and the Mussalmans so that each might loose its own special characteristics? India is so complex in the problem of her civilisation, in her races and her creeds that it is impossi-

ble, that it is even very undesirable—nay, psychologically false,—were we to say that we desire a unity that means the merging of the separate races to make one kind of common life for the common weal of the country. What we want is this : that for the evolution of national life we want the Mussalmans to bring their special characteristics and so we want the Hindus to contribute theirs and considering the chivalry of the past allow no minority to suffer. We are not limiting ourselves to the contributions of the Hindu-Muslim culture alone, but we want the special contributions which the Zoroastrians and the Christians and other races scattered over this land can bring us. Gentlemen, do not for a moment entertain any idea of exclusion, harbour any thought of isolation of one group from another, of one sect from another. But let each bring its own quota of special contributions as free gifts offered lovingly and generously at the feet of the great Motherland for the swelling of the national Commonwealth. What is the special contribution of the Mussalmans ? And what is the special contribution of the Hindus ? We have only to go

back and look to their own records, their own annals, their own culture. The Hindus have to bring to modern evolution of life the principal qualities of that spiritual civilization that gave to the world not merely the tone of the Upanishads, but created for the intellectual and the illiterate alike such glorious type of virtue, courage, wisdom, truth, as Ram among men and Savitri among women, that mystic genius of the Hindus, that spiritual passion, that fervour of self-abnegation, that great first realisation that the true measure of life is not the material, not the temporal, but the spiritual—that is the special contribution that the Hindu race has to make to the future evolution of India. And what of the Mussalmans? The first of the great world religions that thirteen hundred years ago laid down the first fundamental principles of Democracy was the religion of Islam. In the twentieth century we hear that the ideal of the future is Democracy. In the West they speak of it as if it was a thing new born, the discovery of the western people, but the first secret of this great world-wide Democracy was laid in the desert sands of Arabia by a dreamer of the

desert and it is the peculiar privilege of his spiritual children to bring to this mystic India of spiritual value that human sense of Democracy that makes the king and the beggar equal. (*Applause*). Now it is this principle of Democracy that implies certain mental qualities that is inseparable from Democracy. It implies a certain inviolable sense of justice that gives to every man his equal chance in the evolution of national life and these we want imported into our national life, assimilated into our national life which the Hindu community cannot; with its system of exclusion that have been the misinterpreted characteristic of a system that made it merely a true division of responsibility. I say the Hindu community by itself cannot evolve it because, Hindu as I am, I stand here to confess the limitation of my community. We have not mastered that fundamental equality that is the privilege of Islam. What is mutual co-operation? What is the meaning of unity? Not merely bringing together the separate qualities, the mystic genius of the Hindus (*hear, hear*) and the dynamic forces of Islam.

We go further; we want that from

the very beginning of our childhood there should be an interchange of culture. We want that the Mussalmans should hear from their nurses the great history, the great legends that are the inspiration of every man and woman and we want that the Hindu children sitting in the twilight by the peepal tree should thrill with the history, the chivalry of the Arabian armies that carried in one hand the torch of knowledge and in the other, the sword of their own conviction. It is by this interchange of knowledge and culture of each community from its babyhood, that we shall be able to build up not merely that kinship that is born of political expediency. Politics is sordid, politics is vulgar. It deals with current problems which are important to-day and forgotten to-morrow. Politics deals with current details. Nationality deals with the character of the nation and the character of the Indian people is such a complex thing that you cannot in one little phrase say that it is Aryan. You can only say that the character of the Indian is the achievement neither of the mystic qualities of the Aryan race nor of the dynamic qualities of the

Semetic people alone, but the union of the power that thinks and the courage that acts, the mixture of dream and action which alone can make for the true uplifting of the national life. Now I have come to the essential point. It used to be said with reference to Italian Liberty, that Mazzini by himself was merely a dreamer and that Garibaldi was by himself merely a soldier and either of them separately could not have built what is the great Liberated Italy of to-day. But it was the genius of Mazzini the dreamer, Mazzini, that became the deed of Garibaldi that made Italy free. And so in the evolution of our national history the Hindus are the Mazzini and the Mussalmans the Garibaldi. A combination of the visionary, the dreamer with the statesman, the soldier, the mystic genius with the virility of manhood—that is what we want to-day in this great India of ours. Then when we set out to reach this high goal to unite, the consecrated fire that unites the different aspirations of the two different communities—of dream and actuality, shall we pause by the way, because of a little quarrel here, a little faction there?



Shall we be deterred from this triumph of a self-realization of a united people simply on account of some personal resentment here, some passing grudge there, or shall we push on? We have before us only a few difficulties and the goal is so radiant that we cannot stop by the way; for the way is long and our life is short and we cannot pass into the shadows of generations that have gone behind leaving their works unfinished and incompleted. Therefore, we cannot loiter by the way side in settling personal quarrels. We can only set our faces forward. There is a work for the united army to do. There is no separate act for us, no separate gain or loss, no separate suffering, no separate failure, no separate victory, but one common march, one common suffering, one common starvation, one common affinity which death alone can sever. (*Prolonged cheers*).

Gentlemen, these words sound, you will say, like the words of a Hindu visionary, but believe me that the words of visionaries are always the inmost thought that is common in the heart of a nation. There is no poet who has sung, there is no

prophet who has spoken in the past except that he was the articulate voice of the people that had not yet found words to suit their aspirations. Because after all, when you come to consider all that makes the art of a nation, the philosophy of a nation, the literature of a nation, the achievement of a nation, why do you honour the maker of the music, the sculptor, the builder of those temples? Because these are the embodiments of the common vision, the common aspiration, the common experience of Unity, and so, no man is separate from another and when the voice of a prophet speaks, calling like the trumpet, it is only that focussed music of the Indian people and his race that speaks in hymns and everyday life. When I stand up and say to you let there be this union between the vision and action, it is simply that I am articulating your inmost desires and giving words to our inmost conviction. So your leaders are the embodiments of your own dreams and desires, of your own capacity and energies and when you stoop to blame your leaders that they are not true, when you say they are not worthy, they are not

able, have you realised what a condemnation of yourselves it is that you are not worthy enough yourselves as followers to evolve worthy and great leaders who are true to their cause. Gentlemen, when I hear men say we have no leaders, I say, is it because India has no men? Remember that the law of demand and supply always holds good in all things alike small and great and it is only by the worth of your leaders that the worth of followers, of people can be gauged, because, as I said, no man is an original thinker amongst us. Every one of us is but the mirror of his own desires, the embodiments, the images of his own souls and aspirations. Therefore, I pray, consider your shares in co-operating to bring about that reality of your dreams for which you are ready to suffer. I trust you are ready to suffer: and in what way shall these things be done? The way is so simple that when it is put to you in terms of daily life, the glamour, no doubt, becomes less dazzling in your daily action, than when you hear it said in the advertisement of lectures on the Hindu-Muslim Unity. That is a magnificent phrase but in daily

action what does it mean? It means the simple fact that you love your neighbour as yourselves, you realise his humanity as common with your experiences and aspirations of life, his failures, his triumphs, his hopes and fears, his culture and ignorance which are the common inheritance between you and him. (*Cheers.*) There is no difference (*hear, hear*) because of your common aspirations, your common destiny of humanity.

It becomes a very simple thing to say that all men are neighbours of one another, brothers, blood ties, because they have the same tears and the same laughter. Therefore, perhaps, they may have the same kind of aspirations; the same quality of men may have the same kind of aspirations; so why make difference between the tillers of the soil whether he is a Muslim or a Hindu? Does he not suffer from drought, from the failure of harvest, from pestilence, from locusts? The school master, whether he be a Hindu or a Mussalman, has he not the same responsibility of creating within his hands (is he not a sharer of a common responsibility I ask) a bond between brother and brother

whether he be a Hindu or a Mussalman? Then when floods come, and famines come, and plagues come, do not all of us suffer equally? Why make difference between men? Are there different angels of death for the Hindus and Mussalmans to carry them off? Does not every man feel that he must co-operate with each other, what matters if he be a Hindu or a Mussalman? Shall not a Brahmin carry on his head the corpse of a Mussalman and shall not a Syed carry on his head the corpse of a Hindu? What has the corpse of a Hindu or a Mussalman done not to deserve the same sense of honour from each of us who are equally created by God and who have been equally subject to mortality? These are trivial details of life. And when, gentlemen, feelings run high and passions are roused and when men forget this common brotherhood, what are the duties of those whose visions are not obscured? What are the duties of those who have not been excited by some little trifling cause that has such awful, far-reaching effect? Remember that blessed is the man that makes peace and thrice cursed is the man or woman that

sets a little spark of fire into flames. Is not that what we have to remember when we see two brothers fighting at the street corner? Shall not we go to them and say, "Cease, brothers. Be friends." That is the symbolism of what we should do when two communities are at the parting way of national life. Cursed be every man and woman of every rank and creed in this great country that incites, that excites instead of quelling, that urges on instead of quenching, that separates instead of uniting; that, gentlemen, brings up the differences between creed and creed instead of preaching that fundamental Truth of Humanity, the Humanity of one God, the one Indivisible in all men. That is the meaning of the Hindu-Muslim Unity—not resentment, not suspicion, not the ungenerous schism that divides and says aggressively 'we are a majority and you are a minority and so shall trample on you.' These things, gentlemen, are the cancers in the growth of social life. Rather we want the chivalry of the majority—the original children of this land to say to their Muslim brothers, "take what we have because there is no division between you

and us. Are we not the children of the common Motherland and shall the elder, by the priority of his older age, wrest from you your equal inheritance?" This is the feeling of a generous love, of brotherly love that we want to establish as a thing flawless, and in the hearts of the Hindus towards Mussalmans. We want to establish that nobility that knows how to trust without reservation, we want the manliness, the virility of the soldier that says—you give your word of honour and that word shall be as a bond of strength, of manhood that does not consider petty differences of castes and creeds. Gentlemen, that is Hindu-Muslim Unity. Not the betraying of one community by its own leaders against another, not the selling of the community for the sake of the honour that might come but rather the responsible sense of co-operation in the mutual reverence for each other's creed, mutual love for each other's civilisation, mutual trust in your common good intention and co-operation and equal responsibilities in the evolution of your great national life of to-morrow. That is the meaning of the Hindu-Muslim Unity.

Once more we turn to the sacred river flowing beneath us; what has been the symbolism of that river through the centuries? What has been the symbolism of that river? What is the symbolism, I say, that age after age has made it sacred not merely in Sanskrit but in Persian verses as well, that flows giving gift to the land, that waters the fields of both the Hindu and Mussalman alike. It has been the inspiration of the Hindu and Mussalman geniuses as well. The sacred waters of this sacred river, with the solemn music flowing through city after city has washed away sins after sins of the Hindu people and has given cold waters to the thirsting armies of the Mussalmans. And when this great river arrives where it meets another river, in sacred Prayag, there is the Union with mystic music, soul to soul and heart to heart, of the two great rivers, the Ganga and the Jumna—a Sangum of two rivers each without losing its own characteristics and qualities. And yet it is a perfect union. And that should be the symbol of the Hindu and Muslim Unity, each keeping its own culture, its own individual



characteristics, its own purity, its own special colour of its own waters, the music of its own deed even at that point of Union. That is the meaning of the Sangam of national life. That is, gentlemen, the true meaning of the Hindu-Muslim Unity. I will not detain you longer because I have another function to attend—something, gentlemen, which does not a little contribute towards this Unity.

I speak of children studying each the culture of the other that makes for mutual unity; but there is another thing that translated into national life is sure to bind the children of the two communities in a common bond. That other act is the unifying influences of sports that teach us fairplay, justice, co-operation, harmony, equal competition and therefore train us in all those qualities that are needed for virile manhood—the eye, the brain, the mind, the arm and above all things, that training and discipline which will evolve our manhood of to-morrow. That also makes for the Hindu-Muslim union. And now when I have given you the message of the river, the symbol of the river, the symbol of its Union, symbols that you should enshrine

in your hearts, I will ask your leave to go and give away the shield that stands also in its own important manner as the reality of Hindu-Muslim Unity. (*Prolonged and enthusiastic cheers*).

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## THE VOICE OF LIFE.

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*Under the auspices of the Madras Branch of the Madras Students' Convention, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu delivered a lecture on Dec. 17, 1917, at the Gokhale Hall with Mrs. Besant in the chair. There was a packed gathering present including several Indian ladies. The Secretary of the Convention having read and presented an address to Mrs. Naidu, she said :—*

I think very often that the old proverbs that have become truisms are entirely based on an illusion and ignorance of human nature and most of all that hackneyed proverb that familiarity breeds contempt or at least indifference. To-day as I stand in your midst, I realise that, however familiar the voice of life may grow, coming to me from the heart of young generation, it always comes with a new magic, it always comes with a new appeal, it always stirs a new inspiration, it always brings me to the earth with the burden of a new sense of responsibility ;

it carries me with that trust and confidence that a wise young generation demands in those in whom it reposes its trust. To-day after nearly ten years, I find myself in your city, so long ago known as a "benighted" city, but to-day no longer benighted, because the dawn is nearing and the voice of hope has sounded from your shores. The "benighted" city to-day stands far more as a beacon, as a star of hope, and it is said that Madras which was asleep has now been awakened to realise the dreams of that sleeping time; and before we proceed further, it is our solemn duty to thank those that have sounded the clarion call of hope and woke up the slumbering voice of night. The voice of life manifold, speaks not only from the lips of the living but most splendidly from the lips of the dead—the immortal dead. To-day the hall that bears the name of my friend and Master, Gopala Krishna Gokhale, bears testimony to the fact that, though dead, he speaks and not with a single individual voice but through the hundred millions of voices of the young generation who are dreaming of the India of to-morrow and who to-day are preparing to be the creators and the fulfillers of that

dream. Gopala Krishna Gokhale dead has left behind for you a legacy that is the legacy of life itself, for over and over again, speaking to your generation, he has said that life is within you, that the future is within you, that there is no death for India, that India cannot die because India renews itself with the hope and the life of the young generation. Mahatma Gandhi speaks with the voice of life that is not merely human but with the voice of a man in whom life has evolved, developed and realised the divinity of man. He speaks to you with that wonderful eloquence of his life in a music that is heavenly, in a music that is immortal, for his life is set to the tune of human compassion, and the voice of compassion is the divinest type of voice. Then, in your midst, you who said that you honour womanhood and that you honour the sex of the land that you call Mother, you have yet another who sits in your midst prophet-like, and she has brought a message of hope to this city. I speak of her who has been to you, young men of India, not merely a mother but a priestess and prophetess, a holder of the torch of hope, one who has set your life to the music of

the stars. One more voice of life before I come to my subject proper. When I was asked to deliver an address in this hall and the object of the organisers of this address was to collect funds—mere sordid money—as an embodied symbol of their homage to that genius of a great scientist, the young generation realised that genius can only accept as homage love, and love embodied means service, love embodied means something that is bought with a price and that, therefore, though one of the young generation has accused me of selling the spirit of my ancestors in selling knowledge as he said, is not an accusation at all, because young Madras wanted to give some tangible evidence of its homage to the great scientist in Bengal. It is an expression of his homage for the great prophet of nature who has revealed one more secret—the voice of life. The voice of life, he said, was a message of an old proverb to us; the voice of life speaks through all channels of expression that it is possible for an individual or a Nation to find for its realisation. Never before did I realise how the supremest nature of the will has ever found expression till I visited with Mahatma

Gandhi a little humble institution in Ahmedabad for the deaf and dumb, where, with a rapture that gives ecstasy, the dumb were being taught to become articulate. I saw with what patience, with what consummate devotion that teacher was labouring to make one little eager boy pronounce one word articulately by following the shape of the letters. I sat and watched, and each time there was failure I saw eyes dim with anguish, and then I saw the dawning hope in those eyes and I said to myself, "Here is a symbol of life, here is the supreme nature of life, here is the message to this great land that it is in self-expression, in self-realisation that the soul of the race must find its own voice"—the voice of life, and to-day we are like that dumb boy trying to become articulate. There are lessons to follow, but none can teach you those lessons. It is the agony of the individual soul that shapes the letter and makes you articulate, and that is a great lesson that I learnt in that little room in Ahmedabad. It is only individual agony and anguish of failure that gives you hope, and at last with a series of failures which are themselves creative, a race finds

freedom of expression and a Nation finds freedom of its own soul and finds manifold voices of life. The voice of life does not mean one single sound and expression, but it rather means the manifold life into which many mighty rivers of self-expression have become unified. How shall we realise in India that beautiful title? How shall we find which is the voice of life through which all currents of National life shall become dignified? It is only when we realise the manifold rivers of the past that we can prophesy the manifold currents, for, as only recently I have written, it is in the past alone that we, Indians, with our unique history, can find the prophecy and the guarantee of the future. Other Nations must always look forward to to-morrow, because their yesterdays are dead, but we, unique in so many things joyous and grievous, should specially note that in National life we long ago, in the beginnings of time, evolved a certain perfect ideal type that suits our ideal development. There is no Nation in this world that can boast of such a curious achievement, something which almost goes against all the laws of known science, but the laws of



science are one thing and the laws of individual or National soul are another. If we realise what the manifold currents of expression in the past were, we can realise what the manifold currents of expression of to-morrow can be or of to-day can be. What is it that made India so great? What is it that across the seven seas the voice of her civilisation went like volumes of music striking upon the sleeping Nations of the West? It was her genius, her life multiform, not single but many-sided, not narrow but complex, not enclosed within but coming out radiating, radiating, radiating the life with energy, art, beauty, wisdom, religion. History, they say, never repeats itself, but that is not true. History will always be made to repeat itself exactly as by your will-power you can make yourself repeat certain things. The whole basis of civilisation is the evolution of our will-power. It is this wonderful confidence that made man say, "I am God," that has made man able to say, "As yesterday was, so shall be to-morrow and as to-morrow is so shall to-day be." That is the real power of the Hindu race, the peculiar teaching of the Hindu race. For some centuries, the

divinest possession of Indian people has become disintegrated, emasculated, almost dead, and to lose what has been in you the divinest contribution to the civilisation is to disinherit yourself, to sell yourself to exile and make yourselves born slaves when you might be free. That is the shame that I want to bring to your mind that you, having disintegrated your will, are no more capable of saying that history shall repeat itself. You say that National life has gone out of tune. I was told that in this city young men want a message because they are not fully alive. It is irony to ask any one of my generation to give hope to yourselves, for it is the divine privilege of your youth to come back to their generation with the renewal of hope, with a message of music, on the analogy of nature. If you, because you are Indian, are shut out from the privilege of holding to the older generation a message of hope, you have misread the purpose of youth, because, according to my reading of life and according to my angle of vision, it has always seemed to me that the proper adjustment of life would be that age and especially middle age should always look to the younger generation, because

there is no lesson that any civilisation can teach as the divine lesson of hope that comes to younger generation. This is a dream I want to talk about. We are always told that we are dreamers, that we are unpracticable and that we must become a Nation of practical workers. There is a friend of mine who, in his student days with inspiration that comes even to responsible students, said to me that we want practical mystics in the world. My friend, Professor Kandeth, once said that what we want in India is practical mysticism. He uttered the truth that you should all print upon your hearts in letters of fire and gold, for it is this compromise between materialism that deadens the soul and too much introspection that weakens the soul that we want to make a compromise of real strength, not losing the little inheritance of our spiritual power of dream but also assimilating that which makes the dream into deed with power to say, "My dream shall be but the blossom of which the fruit is secured." It is not really I but my friend, Professor Kandeth, that is giving you this message. It has always been said that mysticism is

ecstasy in the Eastern conception, and those that are real mystics in India are those that are not silent but broke into song time after time, age after age and sing the voice of life. But we want songs not poetry, songs in the widest sense of expression, in the widest sense of achievement. If we are to be practical mystics, it means that our songs are to be their embodied vision, that is embodied in our achievements through every channel of expression. Because we are Indians and it is our tradition always to assimilate the best that a foreign civilisation can give us, it is our duty and privilege to be true to our own traditions and absorb all that energy that comes to us from western lands and transmute into Indian energy for the evolving of Indian life. Professor Bose as a scientist dealing with matter got to the very root of nature secret and said. "not in matter but in thought." I want you to take that sentence to your hearts. When a scientist dealing with matter, whose life is consecrated to wresting the secret of matter and passing it on a truth to the world, when he, with that prophetic vision that he must share with the poet, says

that "not in matter but in thought is life," it means that the youths of India have begun to re-adjust themselves to a real conception of life. It means that that which is dead or that which we consider dead really lives, is responsive and is sensitive. It means that we all have greater need of intuition, of calling our own spiritual conception so sensitive that even that which seems dead is really alive and speaks and we can make it respond to our own secret. That is one of the ways where the silence is broken, where the dumb becomes articulate, and in contact with human spirit even dumb matter means life; and it means that the heart of India realises her own power of making the inorganic organic. What is it that is dead in our matter to-day? Nothing more than that which our ancestors realised as really living, and that is our own National capacity. That is the thing that is dead matter which we have to make organic, vital, spreading abroad. You who belong to this wonderful young generation are standing upon the threshold of hope, dream untested, heart unbroken and unscorched. I want to say to you that, though the heart

shall be broken and seared, do not be "afraid, because you have that power in you which can make the dead live." The country realises and your soul realises, for remember "not in matter but in thought," not in possessions, not even in attempts, but in ideals are to be found the seeds of immortality, and the heritage of the Indian Nation is the heritage of ideals, and the ideals of India are immortal.

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## IDEALS OF ISLAM.

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*Under the auspices of the Young Men's Muslim Association, Madras, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu delivered a lecture before a crowded audience at the Lawley Hall, on December 19, 1917, with the Hon. Mr. Yakub Hasan in the chair on "The Ideals of Islam." After receiving the address Mrs. Naidu spoke as follows :—*

I thank you for the beautiful words you have uttered in welcoming me here to-day. But even at the risk of being considered egotistical and conceited, I acknowledge that, whenever I go to a new city, I always look for my special welcome from the Mussalmans of the place. Never have I been disappointed or defrauded of my right. It is my right, because I come from the premier Mussalman city in India. The premier Mussalman power in India rules over the city from which I come, and there the tradition of Islam has truly been carried out for two hundred years, that tradition of democr̄acy that knows

how out of its legislation to give equal rights and privileges to all the communities whose destinies it controls. The first accents I heard were in the tongue of Amir of Kusru. All my early associations were formed with the Mussalman men and Mussalman women of my city. My first playmates were Mussalman children. Though I stand side by side with you as a Kaffir, I am a comrade in all your dreams. I stand beside you in your dreams and aspirations, because the ideals of Islam are so essentially and supremely the progressive human ideals that no human soul that loves progress can refuse allegiance to those ideals. One has to look back to see how the vision of to-morrow may be linked with the vision of the past, and therefore if, in speaking of the ideals of Islam, I take you through a long journey into the past, it is only that you may realise, what only the other day it was my privilege to say to the young generation, that it is only in her ideals that we find seeds of immortality and that, if there be to-day vitality in the Muslim people, it is because the seed was sown into the Desert and the Desert blossomed with rose. Come



with me into the Desert where the sun is dazzling, where the people are brave, simple, quick to revenge an insult, strong to defend honour. What is it that the youngest of the religions has given to the world? Of the old religions, some have died and some are still living. When we come to the religion of the Desert, we find that wonderful adjustment between the spiritual and the temporal, for it was the religion of Islam that built up political empires. Comparatively modern, as measured by the older civilisations, the civilisation of Islam is young indeed. What does the golden age of Islam represent? What was lacking in the golden age that the modern age has been able to evolve for itself? What was lacking in the intellectual splendour and achievement and what was lacking in the political policies, in its colonising powers? Brotherhood is the fundamental doctrine that Islam taught:—Brotherhood of civic life, of intellectual life, of spiritual life in the sense of leaving other religions and creeds free to offer their worship. This is what we call modern toleration, the larger outlook, this is what we call civilisation; this

is what we call the real understanding of human characteristics, the real understanding of those sources that bind human hearts to one another. Ancient Hindu India laid the foundation of her civilisation on the position and responsibility of woman. In modern times, the legal status given to woman is supposed to be a great test of civilisation. Islam, coming centuries later than the Hindu religion, revealed the old world truth in a new language through a new medium and once more asserted the abiding verity that gave woman her responsibility and her place in the National life, by giving her not merely her honour due as wife and mother but as citizen responsible and able to administer her own property, to defend her own property, because it was hers and she was not dependent as mere goods and chattels on husband's and brother's bounty. Sense of justice is one of the most wonderful ideals of Islam, because as I read the Koran, I find those dynamic principles of life, not mystic, but practical ethics for the daily conduct of life suited to the whole world. We are fond of saying that we belong to a rational age, that we belong to a practical

age. If you belong to a practical and rational age, what more shall you find than those codes of ethics laid down so clearly for your daily conduct? How far-seeing was the wisdom that laid down as religious law those great principles that tended to conserve the Brotherhood that the religion taught? What was the meaning of the Haj? Did it matter to God that thousands of Mussalmans went to one place or another since He is everywhere? No. The meaning was that streams of pilgrims from various lands, speaking various tongues, having various traditions and customs, should meet together in one common place and through one common association and memory to consolidate the Brotherhood that Islam preached. The meaning of fast in Muslim religion is that man needs in his busy life some moment to himself when his children might say, "we have set apart this time to contemplate upon Him who is always with us but we forget that He is always with us." When we look at the lego-religious law what is laid down there is the outcome of the prophetic vision that realises that civilisation would tend more and more to-

wards democracy. It was the first religion that preached and practised democracy, for, in the mosque when the minaret is sounded and the worshippers are gathered together, the democracy of Islam is embodied five times a day when the peasant and the king kneel side by side and proclaim, "God alone is great." I have been struck over and over again by this indivisible unity of Islam that makes a man instinctively a brother. When you meet an Egyptian, an Algerian, an Indian and a Turk in London, what matters that Egypt was the Motherland of one and India the Motherland of another? It was this great feeling of Brotherhood, this great sense of human justice that was the gift of Akbar's rule to India, because he was not only Akbar the great Moghul but Akbar the great Mussalman that he realised that one might conquer a country but that one must not dishonour those whom one conquered. You may be a king but your subjects are co-parceners with you in the defence of the country. It was Akbar who laid down the fruitful policy of unity, of that peace which is the greeting of each other. Salaam—the National symbol of peace—was the gift

of Akbar to the India over which he ruled. The intellectual thought that evolved out of this sense of fundamental oneness found its beautiful expression in that spiritual Sufism which is blood-kin to Vedantism. What is the teaching of the Sufi doctrine except the Vedanta which we Hindus inherited—the love of mankind, the service to the world, ecstasy in which self is annihilated into the universal life of humanity? Go to the poetry of Islam. What is there so beautiful in all the wide and manifold realms of literature as that immortal lyric of Hafiz, Rumi, that in the language of man there too in his higher manifestation the lyric genius of Islam, of India has been not less than the epic genius of India or of Europe? When we analyse the evolution of that great literature and when we find the two meeting through one religion, we find, indeed, the inheritors of that dual culture—the blending of mysticism with the semetic, dynamic, logical, practical power of life. There, the dreaming and the action become united, because one religion has bound them and we in India are the richer for our Indian descent. When we come to deal in its national aspect with

the ideals of Islam, having journeyed first into the Desert and found not the mirage but the revelation, we must always come back home, for, like a lark, we must be true to the kindred bonds of home and the home of the Indian Mussalman is in India. His endeavour, his destiny, his hope is bound up with the endeavour, destiny, hope of India. How should the ideals of Islam enrich National life? What are the special qualities and gifts that Muslim India has to contribute to united India? I shall always recognise with pride that, what the Hindu Mazzini gives to India, the Muslim Garibaldi gives to India and they make a perfect type to make an Indian patriot. We want the mystic power of dreaming that is the special inheritance of the mystic Hindu, we want the direct, fearless power of action which is the special gift of the children of the sword. It is the spirit of the sword that we want to be brought to this great land. We want that courage that a soldier kept the sword swift in defence of the country, to revenge any insult to the honour of manhood or womanhood that it defended. Young Muslim is to

put his contribution—not the sword made of steel but the sword of the Islamic spirit which has been re-tempered in the older fires of Vedic cult—the sword of Muslim love dedicated to the Service of Vedic India. That is going to be your contribution to the India of to-morrow. Your poet laureate Dr. Iqbal has done immense service that can never be recompensed adequately, perhaps never even fully recognised by those in other provinces who did not know the National awakening that is coming. It was his patriotic songs that burst like the clarion call when there was strife between two communities. What the poet has done, a poet's race can do. What a Muslim poet can do, a young Islamite can do in always sending out a clarion call, that cry for unity which has been the one safeguard of Islam in the past and is coming to be the one hope of Islam in the future, because Islam has recognised the fundamental duties of Brotherhood. Islam Brotherhood must not confine the ideal of Brotherhood to those alone that profess their creed but must expand the interpretation of that ideal of Brotherhood till every community within this land has

learnt the lesson that Muhammad was born to teach in the Desert 1300 years ago. We want to feel to-day, we who are not merely dreaming the New India but shaping the New India with our hands ; we want to be sure of the other manifold substances that are going to mould the great vessel which is to contain the elixir of the hope of the India of to-morrow, what kinds of earth are going to be moulded into a shape to hold the water of life to refresh and regenerate India. That is the clay that came across the seas—the clay from the Desert to be mingled with the Vedic clay—not only the clay that came from Persian Zoroastrians or from the European Christians in the shape of this National life, but we want more than all other clays to be mingled with the Vedic clay, that clay which is the Desert clay of Islam, because we feel that unless and until these two great elements are blended together unified, so that they can never be separated, there can be no vessel of National life that can last for time and centuries. You who are young Muslims—the hope of Muslim India—I speak to you and to you alone to-night, you who have yet to live.



your lives and hold the destinies to be co-trustees with your Hindu brethren. The battle-ground of animosities has become the flower-garden of unity. They in the north who are so eager to unite with the Hindus for National unity are building it up day by day with great sacrifices. I want you, young Muslims in the south, to take your share in that great work here, and that unity will come when you too spend your energies in manifold directions. A group of young men who have the world before them have turned their backs on personal gain, personal joy and personal recognition and made themselves into a band of Muslim volunteers to bring the light of education to their poor Muslim brethren. Nothing is so significant to-day as the Sultania College where groups of young men have dedicated their lives on the fruitful principles of self-sacrifice which makes Fergusson College the living heart of Maharashtra. I want you to make your southern institution in Vaniyambadi the true centre where the ideal of Islam is practised not only to teach the young Muslim of the south not only the duty of prayer but also to teach

the duty of service to the community. Having already embodied the symbol of your ideals in the south, what limit is there to the dream that you can realise within that centre? What limit is there to the ideals of Islam that can be re-born over and over again into a higher and wider life, because you dream true, you dream fine, you dream in accordance with the right to dream what your religion taught you, what your culture has given you, what your faith entitles you in the future, what your strength empowers you to achieve? Do not allow any one to say to you that, for the preservation of the prestige of Islam, there must be separatism, sectional difference, aloofness, division. Those are the teachings of those who have forgotten the fundamental ideals of Islam. If you are true to your prophet, if you are true to your land, listen to no voice except the voice within your heart, as a great mystic poet has said, and remember that one of the great duties of those who follow the ideals of Islam is to say to yourself what Muhammad said to Himself: "I am a man even as other men." There is summed up the entire ideal of Islam. I

want you to print that text upon your heart. When one, who was building up a great religion, said to himself: "I am a man even as other men," and what one man can do in the Desert, shall not the manifold united heart of Islam be able to achieve in this wonderful land? Hindus and Muslims are martyrs for the same liberty, they dream the same dream, they are the deliverers of the same India. We Hindus and Muslims, are set out together on the common journey, the common pilgrimage to the combined Benares and Mecca of our lives, and that is Indian unity. Our pilgrim race must carry that ultimate shrine some gift worthy of the goal. The twin comradeship in the pilgrimage will bring unity nearer and nearer to the hearts of the pilgrims, and when at last the pilgrim streams, starting from different associations and creeds, find themselves at the journey's end, even she to whom we go shall not be able to say: "Was that my Hindu son, and that my Muslim daughter?" I want you to revitalise all those ideals in Indian life by those things that enriched the past as the special gift of Islam so that we too with you shall join in praising your God who is our God, and we praise the compassionate Master of life, of time, of faith.

## IDEALS OF A TEACHER'S LIFE.

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*Mrs. Sarojini Naidu delivered a lecture on the above subject at the Teachers' College, Saidapet, on 20th December, 1917:—*

Friends,—It is rather a presumption for an outsider to come and talk to you about the ideals of a teacher's life and of greater co-operation and understanding between men and women in the profession of teaching. I can only deal with that subject, not from a practical but from an idealistic point of view, because as I tell you, I have no experience practically of educational matters nor the difficulties of a teacher's vocation; but like everyone else, I have my own ideals of what a teacher's vocation means and should mean. Especially in this great land of India where, above all things, honour and wealth, the teacher, the guru was a man at whose feet kings lay down their obeisance. I do not know of any country in the world where the vocation of the teacher was touched with a sacrosanct quality. But, in giving something of sanctity, India truly realised

the almost divine qualities that are necessary in one who presumes to call himself a teacher of men. A teacher of men, perhaps, sounds a phrase too big and yet what is the teacher of the child excepting the teacher and the maker of the man that is to be ? And more than any politician, more than any soldier, more than any other man who helps to build up a country's progress, it is the teacher who comes first. He deserves the greatest honour because to him is entrusted the preliminary responsibility of building up a character and spirit that go towards impressing themselves upon the life of the to-morrow, that a child is going to build. Therefore, it is very necessary that we to-day, who have fallen away from all our ideals should return to them and to no ideal so definitely and so solemnly as the ideals of the guru and the place of the guru in the national life.

All responsibility is a privilege ; but responsibility is a burden and a heavy burden. To-day, I will speak to you of the quality and nature of this burden and responsibility. Some people say and rightly say, and I do not deny the challenge, that I am always going back.

to the past for my ideals. In that very accusation I find an unconscious tribute to the living qualities of those immortal ideals and the historic continuity of the Indian thought that can take us back to a past that never dies for a living inspiration for the future. And among other ideals, the ideal of education in the past in its own way provides the type not of education but of the personal relation of the teacher with the pupil, of the guru with the disciple. In modern education, especially in India, we have lost sight of that central fact that it is not what the teacher teaches out of the text-books, the facts in history, the boundaries and the rivers and the mountains in geography, but what unconsciously he gives—his personality to the pupil that matters vitally in the quality of the education that the pupil receives. This personal element in education has entirely been lost sight of in the modern systems of education. Everywhere in my travels in India, I make it a special point to go and study the educational institutions and especially to come in contact with those to whom is entrusted the supreme privilege of teaching the youth, and I find how little the teacher

is honoured and how little the teacher honours himself. It is not the honour that comes from men, but it is that self-reverence of that great vocation of the teacher's feeling within him, something of that prophetic reverence which says, "These souls are mine to make and to mould and to give to the country." That is an enthusiasm that I have not found excepting here and there when education has been chosen as a vocation because education chose the votaries that were predestined for the cause. But everyone is not predestined. We have, in the struggle for life, in choosing our profession, to count a means of livelihood and coming down to the most practical ideals of educational vocation, we choose it as one of the professions that will supply bread for our families. But, there is no vocation that need be mechanical, there is no vocation so low that it cannot be ennobled by the noble spirit of one that follows it. And when one chooses the high and responsible vocation of a teacher, how much more should the ennobling process go on, because the vocation itself is noble and that it ennoble those that follow it earnestly, patiently and faithfully? We are told

that education has produced in India—I say too, I feel it, I am a product of that education—not a vital culture but only knowledge. We all know that in studying history that certain battles were fought in certain years, invaders came from certain parts and conquered certain provinces. We know too that this dynasty was succeeded by that dynasty and so on. But take the teaching of history for instance, that history which is the geography of nations. How is history taught? Is it taught as a living background to contemporary things as a clue to contemporary evolution; is it taught as a living factor in the life of the world, or, is it taught that in the year 1066 William the Conqueror fought the battle of Hastings? But the way I was taught never made me understand what came in the way of William the Conqueror, what became of the enormous culture and traditions into England, what followed in the wake of that conquest, how England became Normanised and was extended in the sphere of intellectual and spiritual evolution. Coming nearer home, we Indians, with our own history, how do we teach it so that our sons talk about the battle of Panipat?



The great living background, that great cosmos of history is a dead thing to them, a thing printed on the page between the covers of a text-book. He is not taught anything that can stir his spirit and say to him, "what meant the great historic past meant the great historic future." Take again, geography. What is it? Is it merely that India is bounded by the Himalayas in the north and by the submarines in the south? What are we taught of that living unity between province and province, of that country that is bounded by the Himalayas in the north and by the submarines in the south? Nothing. What is taught of the great rivers that have watched the pilgrims go from north to south and from south to north? What have we learnt of the great centres as are represented by cities, not merely capitals of political powers, but centres of the spiritual thought? When our children hear of Rameswaram, what is it more than a town on the sea-coast? Do they know of the temples there, the centre of a great Dravidian culture? Of Lucknow in the United Provinces, what more do we know of it than the Mutiny—and the Resi-

dency of a bombarded garrison? Do they know that Lucknow was the capital of a Madyadesa of that ancient India where our civilisation flourished?

History and geography separated can never become vital things and to-day the study of geography has been revolutionised that those who learnt geography 20 years ago would think it was something new because now it is not taught that cities are dead things. They are taught as links between race and race. Frontiers are the living means of communication or defence between foes and friends. That is the way of teaching geography.

Then again we come to the teaching of political economy. Political Economy is a science, but I can understand that it is one of the things that most vitally matters in the contemporary reading of a country's condition, of her past and possibilities for the future. When we teach political economy as a matter of academic thing, of what use is it to Indian students unless we can assimilate it to life later on, because of all the sciences of the world political economy should be the most living and go with us into our life so that we may keep

the right perspective of material things and bear it as the right perspective of spiritual things because these two things are intertwined. One has, therefore, to teach the subject as a real living thing. But this central fact we forget that education has to be manifold, many-sided, not merely technical or literary or scientific or artistic ; but education thoroughly understood, properly realised, means co-operation of every type of teacher for the building up of a manifold culture in the mind of the child. We are getting one-sided. Our education makes students not scholars, imperfect students not mellowed scholars. For scholarship implies a living life of culture, and culture is a thing widely separated from knowledge. The Italians who have a language that is so capable of expressing the many shades of thought and reality have two separate words instruction and education. Instruction is a thing that we get in the Indian schools and colleges. Education is a thing that we got in the past and that we do not receive in the present. The vital difference lies here that the Indian teacher himself, the outcome of machine-made systems, becomes a machine. (*Cheers.*) There

is nothing to cheer. It is something to weep. He is a machine; he can turn out so many hours a day, paid at such and such a rate, and can drill so many facts into the head of the child. The child passes through the examination-mill and gets a certificate. He knows certain dates unrelated to anything else. He knows the names of certain rivers. That is all he knows. He has instruction, has knowledge. His mind is a store-room overcrowded with things that are absolutely of no use to him. For, of what use is unrelated knowledge, of what use are isolated facts. When the great crisis of life comes to you how does it help you? But education is this. When knowing that a certain battle was fought in a certain year, the man in the crisis of life remembers how a certain man won or lost, can look in the face of danger, that is the culture, that is the date become life, that is instruction become culture, because culture is a thing that is the spirit of instruction, that which impresses into a man's life to enrich him, to help him in every moment of his life. That is culture, that is a thing that one in a thousand gets in India when he gets his

diploma. So, I think that one of the first things that we, as teachers, have to realise is the re-vitalising of our own spirit, the re-kindling of our own torches of our intellect and the spirit. Until you can do that how can you hope to light the little rows of unlighted lamps ; for by the flickering light you cannot light the lamps. It is this flame within you that I want to re-kindle. We as Hindus can have no better symbol for our spirit than the flame that is the type of our home, that is the type of our spiritual altars, that has been the type of our life, the type of our death. The hearth fire, the funeral fire always is the flame with a true symbol of the Hindu spirit because the flame is that one thing that purifies, kindles, gives life, cleanses. We want the flame to be re-kindled. We have ashes, we have the embers dying. The spirit is dying within the heart of the Indian teacher. It is not dead. It is to be re-kindled bringing illumination into the heart of India. The teacher's vocation is this, that though he himself sits in his chair, he is serving the country in manifold ways. He is the statesman and he is the poet:

he is the scientist and he is the merchant, because as Stevenson says in a song of his : "The sword maker sits by his forge but he goes wherever his sword goes and travels." He who makes the sword fights the battles. And the one man, the one teacher is the manifold patriot because he gives to the country the soldier, the statesman, the scholar, the trader, the lawyer, and those who are required in the complex building up of a national life. The old ideals of teaching lay in this that the Guru gave up, renounced willingly Lakshmi for Saraswathi in literature so that he came to the verge of poverty. But the spirit of it was that not for wealth, not for material gain, but that, freed from the burden of material greed, his spirit might be free to soar itself and bring from the heaven of wisdom some message of hope for the disciples around him. That was the ideal of the teacher in the olden days. I know teachers still who keep that great ideal, who look on themselves as prophets of old looked on themselves, dedicated, consecrated their lives, were the symbols of their instruction not merely in speech but their lives had to be the embodiment of wisdom they taught.

One such Guru I know who, having within his grasp all that material wealth could give, all that rank could give and success could give, said, "No, I come of a race of those who taught spiritual wisdom, whose doors were opened to poor and rich alike and I, son of a Brahmin race whose duty it is to give wisdom, give knowledge, I do not want wealth and power. I want to sit somewhere so that the multitude of truthful hearers might hear." And that man was my father. If I have no personal qualification to speak on the ideal of a Guru, at least I have before me the living memory of a man who for two generations not merely taught knowledge but gave wisdom, and wisdom of that kind that from far and near, rich and poor, men and women, princes and beggars, came to hear what he had to say. That was the true democracy of a Guru that makes no ranks in the giving of wisdom, in the teaching of ideals. The man who had come on the elephant had to sit beside the man whose feet were stained with dust. And that was one of the greatest lessons, practical lessons, unspoken but empatically achieved, that lesson of the real brotherhood between

man and man when the soul of man comes to learn wisdom. That is one of the great ideals that you teachers have to carry out in your schools and life. There is no difference between any class that comes to you, between any community that comes to you; your duty is to be impersonal in the giving but personal in the gift. It seems like a paradox. It means this, that if to a hundred who come to learn, each has the equal right on your attention and mind, to each give equally impersonally the best that is in you to give and personal and intimate should be the gift because it should come out of the depths of your conviction and knowledge. It is the giving of your self not the giving of your knowledge that matters; for, remember that for every hour that you spend in the school-room the child is unconsciously moulding the impress of its character from you. Your finger is marked on the potter's clay. There your impression is carried through life. The other day, Mr. Hydari, who has been elected President of the Muhammadan Educational Conference, was discussing with me some items of the Presidential speech and one of the things



that struck me very much was the ideal of a Guru, a teacher. He spoke of a great Englishman, Professor Wordsworth of Elphinstone College, Bombay, whose memory will never die in the Bombay Presidency. Here was an Englishman, not an Indian, but he was a born Guru. He knows no difference of race or creed. Because Wordsworth was in Elphinstone College, it was possible for Telang and Gokhale and Ranade to be great Indian patriots. I want you to understand that a Guru is of no race ; his is a spiritual kingdom, not the kingdom of race or civilisation. Now, Professor Wordsworth had in him the true spirit of a teacher and, therefore, he understood that if a son of any Indian has come into your hand you do not want to make a bastard Englishman but a true Indian of him. But what he revealed of the Indian spirit to the Indian youth that produced the Gokhale and Telang and Ranade, that is one of the great practical illustrations of the personal, intimate gift of character to the child. It was because Professor Wordsworth had that great mission, that great impartial vision of right and the national reticence

that he was able to give the virile qualities of the English race to the Indian spirit and produce not merely Indians who had learnt English as instruction but who had absorbed the spirit of the English greatness into enriching the ancient spirit and civilisation. Now, you may have the Muhammadan children to teach or the Muhammadan teacher may have a hundred Hindu pupils. It never means that a Hindu becomes a bad Hindu when he is taught by a Mussalman. Not at all. Each is confirmed in his own faith because faith is a thing, no matter what the doctrine, that can only be strengthened by a man of character, a person very fine, no matter to what race or creed he belongs. You in Southern India do not come across with cosmopolitan element. You come across with sects and castes. And now I know I touch upon a very delicate point. It is very controversial and bitterly emphasised, unnecessarily and wrongly emphasised. What was the sect and caste in the old days? Not for division but meant for the final unity of service by division of labour. We have lost sight of this fact. We feel that we want separate schools for Brah-

mins, Non-Brahmins, Panchamas, etc. But there is the fundamental problem, the Hindu-Moslem problem, because a race of teachers has risen that understand, no matter whether Hindu or Muhammadan, the teacher's duty is to teach life. Here again, what matters if a Brahmin sits side by side with a man who has not got that chance of evolution? What does it matter to you? Your duty is clear. Your duty is to kindle, to hold the flame, to light the blaze. That is where your responsibility comes in, so that understanding your own duty, your own responsibility, you begin to feel within yourself that fervour that comes of the knowledge that the mission is yours which only you can fulfil. Who is there that can replace you in the national life? Who is there that can ever mar, if not, repair your bad work in later life. You are laying the foundation on which others raise walls and it is those that lay the foundations that are the true artists who are never recognised. Who cares when praise is accorded, when the design is praised and the architect is congratulated and a great man comes to perform the opening ceremony and says

how beautiful are the decorations on the wall. No one remembers where are the men that laid the foundation. But laying of foundation is a privilege great enough to bring its own immortality. But why need the recognition loudly expressed by men! Is it not enough to know that to you is given the first duty of building up this human edifice? The child comes to you eager with no memory behind it. Something on which you write, the memory it will recall in later life. If you have given to the child the gift of hope out of your own conviction of hope, nothing in later life will make that child despair but if you have out of your own pessimism, of your own despair and your own narrow vision or your own narrow sympathies constricted that child's expansion, all that child's life will be directed to wrong that no later influence will wholly repair. So I want you to remember the solemnity of your profession, the real vital quality of your profession and you must feel that you are the nation-builders. The mother first, the Guru afterwards, and then the chance of the changes of life. But you give the direction, you mould, you carve:

and uphold and conserve, or you destroy. How many young spirits are not known to have been ruined hopelessly, ruined consciously, and it can all' be traced back to the lack of sympathy in the teacher when the child went to school with his eager dream. It was the spirit and the rebuff was not in so many words that has been the bane of many a youth who in later life, seeing a greater vision, has not been able to follow it because the habit of being rebuffed became second nature to him that at every step he became impatient. Have we not in our own time faced that? Have we not felt that the worst anguish of our lives has not been so much the bane on the real things later on as the rebuff that we received from our teachers?

I want to emphasise another point. We in India have lost the tradition of beauty and that was one of the greatest traditions, because if beauty, the love of beauty, the supreme necessity for beauty were not considered and acknowledged an agent of the spiritual life, why was it that our great temples and monasteries were built, where nature spoke in epic tongues

of the unseen beauty, of the great faith, because beauty always reconciles you to the unseen, always brings that exaltation of the spirit ; beauty has that glamour and it helps us. That is the power, the alchemic power of beauty. It makes it possible for the young vision to perform that miracle which in the words of an Irish poet is able to transmute clay into gold, weariness into ecstasy. It is really a Hindu saying though it came from a Celt. And that only comes when one has this love of beauty. When I say beauty I do not mean it in any material sense, but beauty that has the spirit of life, that responds to all the influences of nature, the influences of concrete beauty, such as we find in art, music. These things are left out of the curricula of the Indian teacher's mind. Beauty must be the background of his instruction and it must be the goal of his teaching, for beauty means harmony, the harmonising of knowledge and the conflicting elements in life, the harmonising of joy with sorrow, the harmonising of weakness with strength, the harmonising of failure with victory. That is the meaning of beauty and we

have lost it in modern life. We have lost the true clue that enabled our saints and mystics to make penance. Theirs was the religion of ecstasy; ecstasy because they loved beauty and understood beauty and they sought for beauty. It was the religion of beauty that was the religion of renunciation of old days. If you are true to your own traditions, go back and say even as the Guru said to his disciples, "I too in myself would embody their ideals." It is in yourself to say "I shall be a living academy in myself; I shall be the centre of life and every young soul that has passed through my hands will be my living means of communication to bear to the world the ideals within me." That is the ideal of the Indian teacher because it is the ideal of ancient India and it is the only ideal that will transmute mere instruction into culture and change mere facts into life.

Now we come to another point which is not quite novel, not quite unprecedented as some of us might imagine. In our modern life we find that women are not sharing with men of India the duty and privilege of being the layers of foundation.

Why is it that this erroneous idea has come in that it is quite a new thing in the West that women may be teachers. Long before any definite, conscious system of education was evolved and labelled vocation for teachers, it was understood at the beginning of time that the first teachers of the world were women. They are still women, the most illiterate women. In India the first teacher of the child is the woman. So in her home the most illiterate peasant woman is entrusted with teaching the first lessons of life to her child. Is it not logical that the educated Indian woman should expand the sphere of her right to teach by coming out and sharing with you in ennobling comradeship this privilege of giving citizens to India? For the Indian teachers this is the most fruitful lesson to learn, the lesson of true co-operation with the sisters who have come to stand beside you as comrades. The whole of our old civilisation was based on the equal responsibility in the spiritual life of the women so that you to-day cannot perform your sacrifices unless the woman stands by your side. What is it that it is a symbol of? If a woman



stands beside your sacrifices according to your religious teaching, if in your home she stands beside you, sharing with you the joys and sorrows, comforting you, rejoicing with you in the hour of victory, who are you that you should exclude her in this function, this divine privilege? For, no man lives for himself and no woman lives unto herself and no nation can be single-handed. You want the two hands of a nation to uplift itself and together we shall carry the soul of India to the heights of her eternal glory.

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## THE HOPE OF TO-MORROW.

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*Under the auspices of the Madras Students' Convention and the George Town Students' Club, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu delivered an open air address on "The Hope of To-morrow" at Gowri Vilas, Royapetta, on the evening of the 20th December, 1917, with Mr. J. H. Cousins in the chair. There was an immense gathering of ladies and gentlemen numbering about six to seven thousand persons present. Mrs. Sarojini Naidu said :—*

Were I first to choose one sentence out of the entire realm of language to sum up what hides in my heart as the secret of my "hope of to-morrow," I should say one sentence only and then keep silence. I would say "you are the hope of to-morrow." But I fear that my silence, however great a tribute to my hope, will not comfort you. How will it satisfy you? Many of you during the past few days have heard me speak, and you will say that mine is merely a monotone, but sometimes in the history of Nations, it is necessary

that one should have a lyre not of many strings but one string. Such a crisis in National life is here that only those who have the courage to be called monotonous strike that one note over and over again till its echoes re-echo in the hearts of the crowd, and it is only the singer of that one note has to-day a place in the National life. We are told that the age is irreverent but I think not, for nowhere the great Indian civilisation can be irreverent. Reverence is the very blood in our veins, and therefore it is the only guarantee of the salvation for the future. Have you considered what is your share and responsibility in the bringing about of this hope of to-morrow? Yesterday is over; to-day is over: concrete problems are here, contemporary things are here and there cannot be a future for a human race that has not evolved historically and spiritually from the past. Therefore, the problems of to-day, the contemporary things of to-day are concrete problems and not illusory visions of the past. It is well for us in thinking of to-morrow to take a look backwards to that radiant yesterday. What constituted the

fulfilled hope of yesterday ? What was it that made India great ? What was it that gave opportunities to her genius to find such manifold and immortal expression ? It was that India was true to herself. She believed that the only authentic expression of the Nation springs from within the soul of the Nation ; and though a Nation must absorb all that is beautiful in other civilisations and in other ages, it can only be enriched by a foreign civilisation but not dominated by alien things. After all these thousands of years, we find perennial and beautiful that great treasure of intellect and spirit that is ours that we do not remember as ours. Those philosophies are alive to-day. They have outlasted time, because that philosophy was the evolution of the proven thought of India. Her religion lives to-day, and even as five thousand years ago on the banks of the Ganges the hymns of ancient Vedas were chanted, so to-day we de-nationalised pilgrims, that go to the Ganges hear the self-same chant and there not only by the water of the Ganges are our spiritual sins absolved but they purify instinctively all our intellec-

tual transgressions. I, the child of two civilisations, the hybrid of two civilisations, went to the Ganges, that eternal Ganges which is the one test of Hindu spirit, and there without my knowledge, my intellectual transgressions fell from me and I remember that I was indeed the child of the Vedic spirit. The evolution of India was authentic and outlasted centuries because it was spiritual. It has been perennial because it was elastic; it was able to retain its vitality and enrich itself age after age out of your thought that age brings, out of your forces that every new conquest brought to India. It was only a temporal conquest by a foreigner, because the spirit of the alien became absorbed into the spirit of India. The vitality of India has been stronger there than all things reminding one of that miracle where many rods have come and this one rod of the Indian spirit has been able to swallow all those rods that turned into the serpent of wisdom, and that has been the value and secret of the past of India; and because you are the inheritors not merely of the civilisation that you find to-day enclosed within the pages of the Vedic teachings and

carved on the rocks of temples, revealing cosmic history in little coins, not because merely of the material embodiment as souveiners from that glorious past but because something of life has been there, not the rock temples only, not the teachings of the Upanishads only, not the Edicts of Asoka only, but the living spirit that sung the hymns on the banks of the Ganges five thousand years ago sings to-day the self-same chants of the self-same God. Keeping this background of historic spirituality in your minds, turn towards the dawn that you desire from dawn to dawn, not from darkness to dawn but from the dawn to the dawn. Dawn to dawn implies a preparation for the dawn. We all know that, where the dawn dies to-day, the whole world is a miracle of preparation that a great dawn of to-morrow shall be born. That is the function of the waiting time between dawn and dawn—getting ready the world, beautifying the world, enriching the world, so that the dawn that succeeds upon that dawn might find a richer welcome and a greater glory of the coming dawn. The preparation for the coming

dawn means that we look to the New India that shall be the child of the old India which was lovely so that New India, the child of old India, shall be more lovely, and yours is the responsibility of enriching and glorifying and beautifying the coming of that Renaissance that shall make the daughter lovelier than the mother, lovely though that mother was five thousand years ago. Enriching does not mean adding repetition to repetition, but the enrichment of life that makes diversity into some unified heritage for the people. The period between that early dawn and this later dawn has given you all the materials for this enriching, for remember how many streams of intellectual and spiritual thought have come into this country, how India has had the opportunity of enlarging herself, filling herself with vast treasures of thought, Iranian, Semetic, Christian, Muslim. When I was a child—and that was very long ago—I did not know that there was any real difference excepting of language between the culture of the Muslims and that of the Hindus. We never knew the Hindu-Muslim problem, because we were taught that there was no

difference between the Hindu and the Muslim thought behind. The veils that covered both the cultures laid the same spirit that was to serve Mother India. You cannot afford to be provincial only in your outlook ; you must learn to share the life of the entire Nation, and the crucial problem to-day is the problem of unity that shall be indivisible and immortal. How shall you within your province show that you have been transfigured by this great ideal of unity ? In the north, this idea of unity has got into our heart. If I should say in the north that there is a problem in the south of India that we did not realise, they would say " Had we a Brahmana—non-Brahmana problem here ? " A great French poet has said : " To each one his own infinity. " It means that his own infinity is his own infinite opportunity and responsibility. A strange thing is this infinite spiritual opportunity and responsibility, a thing that you cannot lightly dismiss. You cannot say to-day, " I am busy with my personal gain and personal happiness. " It knocks at your door and asks for an answer. Your infinity here is clear : it has no veils upon its face, it has no



seals upon its doors. It is an open secret from which you may turn away but it chases you as a hound in heaven. Remember that the National responsibility, the service of India, must chase you. You will be asked, "What did you do to establish that hope of to-morrow, of which I speak to-day" The great French phrase, "To each man his own infinity" reduces itself to the simple question, a thing of daily consciousness, a daily service, a daily manifestation, the sincerity of your own dreams transmuted day by day into that current coin of loving service in the cause of Indian unity. Remember that the poet's dream is no more than the mirror of your hearts. If I say to you that this great hope of to-morrow lies in you, it simply means that within you is the power to achieve. How shall you face the responsibilities? The real measure of a Nation is the measure of average action, of average man: it is not the great man or the great genius who is the true standard of a Nation's capacity or worth. I wonder if it has ever occurred to you when you hold out great names as the guarantee of India's greatness, how false

and illusory are your standards of judgment. Great men belong to no race: they are a Kingdom apart. But it is the average man of a race that is the only true measure of that Nation's capacity. When we say that we are a great Nation and if some man says to you, "prove categorically in what way you are great," can you say to him, "Look at the great commercial enterprises, our economic prosperity, the original art, look at the high standard of education of women, look how free we are to administer our laws?" That man will answer if you say so. "Young man, wake up, wake up. Are you still dreaming of the past when it was so? It is not so any longer." That answer amuses you, but it does not amuse me. I want you to understand and realise what is the average of India to-day, what is the average intellectual capacity, what is the average political capacity, what is the average literary and artistic capacity? Is it even mediocrity? I doubt it. The great art of self-expression has died out of us. Because we have not understood the vital nature of the life of self-expression, our arts have degenerated, our literatures

are dead, our beautiful industries have perished, our valour is done, our fires are dim, our soul is sinking. The average taste of India's average man is a measure of sleep not even illumined with the glory of dreams. This immense crowd which represents the people of to-morrow, listening to the words of a woman, is the first augury of the hope of to-morrow that India has returned—whether consciously or unconsciously does not matter but inevitably—to that first ideal of the Devi. It is when India comes back to her old ideal of wisdom and recognises the place that woman is an embodied deity of Lakshmi and Saraswati combined that the hope of to-morrow will be coming into the skies with fresh rose and purple beauty. There are more things than the waking of the Devi aspect of Indian woman. One has to wake to the human aspect of those who are treated as brute beings. The children of those whom you have not given the living chance said to the Viceroy and the Secretary of State that, within sixty feet of their wells, they are not allowed to come. Think now your brothers arraigned you of robbing them of their very right to be human. The hope

of to-morrow will never come until you repair that wrong, and the only reparation of the wrong is the abolition of the wrong. Women who, according to your tradition, should have been your comrades, your equals sharing, according to the old Shastric teaching, your spiritual and civic life, what are they to-day? You dream dreams, but you are hampered because your women have lost the power of walking side by side with you. Those classes so numerous in the south, your religious south, your south of Ramanuja, are a de-humanised people without a chance, and yet the hope of to-morrow lies in this. Even the deaf say, "we shall be made to hear,-" the dead say, "we shall live," the dumb say, "we shall speak." All that we can do is that each of us, recognising our own individual capacity, should recognise our own individual responsibility and take our share, and faithful trust implies doing our duty, and each doing a little makes a congeries of achievement that is called National achievement, National consciousness, National spirit, National mind. The dying flame must be kindled, and no outside hand must come to re-kindle that

flame. Nothing else counts—not your knowledge, not all the degrees for which you break your youth, not all those posts for which you sell your birthright, not all those titles for which you sell your country. Only love counts—the love of India. When the great hour comes, when all the secrets of the young generation are yielded up to the judgment of time, what shall posterity say? It will not say, “What were the qualifications you had?” It will not say, “How many lands have you left, how many houses have you left?” It will not say to you, “What material good have you left us?” But it will say, “O, dead, wake up, and speak what spiritual treasure have you left us, what of beauty in art have you left us, what of heritage of freedom have you left us, have you only lived that we shall still be slaves or did you die that Ind might be free?”

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## THE CONGRESS-LEAGUE SCHEME.

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*Mrs. Sarojini Naidu in seconding the Resolution on the Congress-League Scheme of Reforms at the Madras Special Provincial Conference on December, 21, 1917, said :*

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen of the Madras Presidency,—I do not know exactly what right I have to stand in a Special Conference of the Madras Presidency to address you on so momentous a question as has been embodied in this resolution. But as the time has long since gone by when anything could remain merely provincial, when any question could remain merely local, I crave your indulgence for a few moments to add my words of support to this resolution.

What are the strongest arguments that one can bring in favour of the irreducible minimum of demands for reform? Last September, I spent the entire season when the Imperial Legislative Council was in session and day after day, sitting in the visitors' gallery, my heart grew bitter

within me for this reason. Some of the most important and vital questions that would conduce to the progress of Indians 'as Indians were brought up and as resolution after resolution was brought up in favour of simultaneous examinations of the Civil Service or the proportion of the recruits to the Civil Service, or the amelioration of the condition of the railway passengers or anything that might help a little to remove the political or the social defects of the nation, what did I find but an instinctive and invincible combination of the official and non-official European element in permanent opposition against every resolution? (*Cries of shame, shame!*) That is what I said, to a friend of the Secretary of State who is with him that, after all our demands are based not on a political grievance so much but because our national self-respect has been trampled. It is not, as I said, a question of four-fifth elected or one-fifth nominated, not a question of so many more portfolios for Indians and so many less for Europeans. It is rather the fundamental question of our national self-respect being restored and that is the origin of this ir-

reducible minimum of this Congress-League scheme of reforms. (*Cheers*).

A few months ago I was present in Delhi when the great field of discussion came in, the budget. The budget had been prepared, it had been passed, published and then by a farce—that is an insult—the Indian members were allowed to give their opinion on the budget. It is, as my friend Mr. Jinnah said, ‘to put the cart before the horse, to pass the budget and invite discussion afterwards.’ (*Cheers*.) Now, if we Indians have the control over the finances of our country, it cannot be that important estimates are passed for the current year, that money is disbursed or earmarked for any department without the sanction of the Indian members who have at heart the interests of the country. Then if you want more representation, representation that is not merely nominal but real and that those who represent the people in the Council of the Viceroy should be true spokesmen of the people, we must have our control over the revenues and the taxes because we alone know what presses hard on our people. (*Cheers*.) We must have the power to control the educational policies because we



see around us those deadening results of foreign policy of education in which our voice has not been heard. Therefore more vital than anything is it that the educational portfolio should be in the hands of the Indian Member of the Council. When we have a large number of Indians represented in the Council, the voice of the many cannot be denied and when the voice of the many is heard then that one crucial reason of our deterioration, that is the right to avenge and the right to defend our country, that inalienable right of man, of being able to protect his household will come to us.

With regard to communal representation, I personally am quite in agreement with Mr. K. P. Raman Menon and Mr. P. Kesava Pillai. And I think you will find that the majority of thinking men, Hindus and Muslims, are in agreement that the principle of communal representation is not the ideal one, but in practical politics sometimes we have to go by expediency towards the path of the ideal and that is why till we are able to establish that abiding trust in each other, love and co-operation, there should be communal represen-

tation. It is a temporary barrier between community and community and directly trust is established. Mussalmans will say, 'O Brethren Hindus we trust you.' The non-Brahmin will say, 'O subtle Brahmins we trust you.' The Panchamas who carried the bond of centuries will say, 'O Castemen we trust you.' Nobody will want separate representation but we will establish the true democracy of Indian life by saying the best men shall represent the best interests of India. Now, over this question of Muslim representation a lot has been written and said for and against. My own feeling is this—and I see a Mussalman friend looking at me very critically—(*cheers*) that had you not provided generously for the separate representation, it were not possible that within 5 years Mussalman brethren would have stood shoulder to shoulder with you, for, disorganized and so much behind the Hindu community they were. Because they began their political education later it was necessary for them to consolidate themselves as a unit first before they could come in a body to work side by side with their Hindu brethren. The other

day I was speaking to a great man, a Member of Parliament. He said to me, "It is all very well when you talk of Home Rule and the Congress-League scheme of Reforms as the first instalment of Home Rule. Then how are you going to make the masses understand the meaning of Home Rule." I said, "As long as we are patriotic in English we cannot make the masses understand. But we are having our Vernacular patriotism just now. There are groups of men who have made it possible to have the Gandhi's monster petition signed by the same masses." He said, "But how do you explain Home Rule to them?" I said "We can always explain the view by explaining to them their past. One has only to say to the villager that this Home Rule is no more than an expansion of his village councils and his own village democracies. It is the modern interpretation of his village panchayat liberated, enriched and co-ordinated to a vast central focus of power." But I said to him that there was one new element in it that did not belong to ancient India and that is I take a little trouble to adjust the views of the ordinary peasant in India and espe-

cially in Southern India. In Northern India where the Hindu and the Muslim have worked and lived side by side, it is no novel idea. But in the south where the problem is not so vivid, so urgent and frequent, it is not always possible to make the Hindu villager understand that principle of the Home Rule democracy. But I said to him, "It is nothing that is difficult, nothing stands in our way because the heart of literate India beats in unison with the heart of the illiterate India and they will not be left out in any scheme of reform because without them we cannot work. They are the fates that will carry us to the goal." He was struck by what I said, but he said. "That is all right about the masses. But what about the Mussalmans?" I said, "This Congress-League scheme is the work of the flower of the Hindu and Mahomedan intellect and spirit combined: representatives and elected people of the two communities have framed this. Where there is no education there is unity; where there is education there is unity, but where there is half education amenable to persuasion and coercion there is no unity." (*Cheers.*) So, gentlemen, we

must support the Congress-League scheme. It is true it is an imperfect scheme. All schemes when you bring them to the merciless test of logic are illogical. And who is there from the Viceroy downward that is going to suggest a better scheme? If there is a better scheme less illogical and more perfect, we are willing to put it before the people and let them try the comparative merits of the schemes. We are not so rigid and hidebound in our own prejudices and predilections that we must enforce our own wishes in the best interests of the people as against better schemes. We are not so illogical ourselves, though our schemes may be. You can support the Congress League scheme, not merely by raising your hand and by offering your vote but in your own life by carrying out the principles of this scheme demanding and fulfilling the demands in your own community and insisting that the education policy of your own horizon is within your own hands. Begin to take a little more interest in matters around you. Do not put by your patriotic instincts for times and seasons convenient to you. It does not mean that all of you should be politicians but it does

mean that all of you should be patriots. Patriotism is not a thing divorced from real life. It is the flame that burns within the soul, a gem-like flame that cannot be extinguished. The Congress-League scheme is a little thing. If you be not united and earnest even that little is too much of a burden for you to sustain, but if you are united, if you forget your community and think of the nation, if you forget your city and think of the province, if you forget you are a Hindu and remember the Mussalman, if you forget you are a Brahman and remember the Panchama then and then alone will India progress. (*Loud cheers and applause.*)

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## CO-OPERATION AMONG COMMUNITIES.

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*At the First Annual Conference of the Madras Presidency Association on Dec. 22, 1917, in moving a Resolution on the above subject, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu said :*

President and Members of the Madras Presidency Association,—It sometimes happens that when one's thoughts and energies have become concentrated in and consecrated to one single purpose, in course of time, one's name becomes associated with certain cause, one's name becomes identified with a certain purpose. And to-day if I have been honoured, I, a mere stranger in Madras, with the proposal of a resolution, which, in my opinion, is the most vital resolution of this Conference, it is because in my humble way I have always sought for that unity which this resolution seeks to embody. (*Cheers.*) The resolution runs thus:—

“That this Conference would appeal to the various communities of South India to sink their local differences in this supreme

moment in the history of India and sincerely co-operate with one another for the general uplift of the Motherland."

It is very curious that last evening, when I went home from the Special Provincial Conference, I found a letter awaiting me which was meant to reach me in time before I came to the Special Conference. It was not from any section of the Hindu community at all, but it was from a community of Southern India. It contained an appeal to me as a friend of every community, whether in the South or in the North, to use my influence—if I should have any—to use my persuasion—if I should have the power to persuade—for greater co-operation among us all just at this moment. I might ask the great Hindu community of the South, in the name of my Mussalman brethern to build up this unity of which we all speak on a real brotherly basis of give and take. The day before yesterday I was present at the meeting of the Muslim League and it was my great privilege to be allowed to speak there on the same great question, the one question on which I am able to speak. I spoke to them adequately in your name. I



asked my Mussalman brethren of the South to learn the brotherly task of give and take, always to work in harmony, in co-operation, without resentment. I pointed out to them that had the Hindu Community not been brotherly, the division of loaves and fishes that have yet to come would not have been so generous. To-day I should stand as an ambassador of the great Mussalman community and ask in their name before I begin my proper task of supporting the resolution, that if you are sincere in wishing to pass this resolution of sinking differences and of bringing about co-operation and harmony into your lives, you will start not with smaller divisions but first learn to heal the big cleavage that still exists to-day between the two great races, between the two great faiths. I, a friend of the Mussalmans, would ask my brother Hindus not to raise any objection if the Mussalmans who respect our feelings, ask that the Hindus should respect their feelings. There is sympathy. They want you to prove that you are truly brotherly. If you truly wish India to be united and not divided, even as you value your religious

beliefs, even as you cherish your religious faiths and your prejudices, if they ask that as a token of the gift of your love, you will not object to the little thing they demand that when our Hindu processions pass the Moslem mosques they shall not violate one of the primary mandates of Islam, that there should not be sound to break the silence of the mosque. It seems to me that the existence of an Association like this presupposes not a show of a wide division between the two races and the two creeds, a sharp bitter division originally but now happily by patriotic love grown narrower and narrower, a division between the children of the same race, the sons of the same race, only a little divided by one having the birthright of spirit and the other the birthright of material things. Both in the speech of the Chairman of the Reception Committee and the speech of your President to-day we find that though the Madras Presidency Association was started as a sort of speaker of the non-Brahman community, though it was founded as a channel of the expression of the community of non-Brahmanas determined

to have a responsible voice in the shaping of the national destiny, they have been able by their patriotism to rise above their own petty personal needs and desires. "This is a supreme moment in our history" says the text of the resolution. It is a supreme moment in our history, because to-day we Indians not only of the South but the Indians of the united India are asking for that which is the birth right of every civilized nation. We are asking for the right to live within our own land. We are the children of the soil whose flesh is made out of the clays and waters India, whose spirits have been kindled by the eternal stars of India, we are asking for a right not to be exiles in our own land. (*Cheers.*) But unless that cry of the exiled children of the mother goes forth as one voice of many million chords, one indivisible voice of many million chords, rising out of one undivided, indivisible heart of India, how dare we say, "give us freedom because we are united." I have been told on good authority which I cannot divulge that the great Viceroy, in the course of these few weeks when India has been knocking at his doors, has never

been so puzzled as in this historic city because the heart is divided here. One little rift might make him say that the music of unity is not perfect. I ask you, friends in the South of India, to remember the great traditions of your great province. They say to-day in the north—and I have heard it over and over again with pride because remember that you have adopted me, by marriage I belong to you—"is it to the South that we must turn for inspiration, to that South which we for years and years looked at as something apart, alone, asleep, unrelated to the manifold progress of which we are proud"? Yes, it is true to-day. I think the lamp burns very brightly in the South of yours with a flame that sheds lustre far and reaches even the historic North. But where that historic North has already achieved unity, the bitter antagonisms and animosities which filled the North have come through the crucible of many centuries of hate into a period of harmony and peace, here in the South, where the lamp burns brightly, the house is divided against itself. How great the dissolution and how

great the despair ? No despair is so deadly as the despair of an injured faith. If you to whom the eyes of the rest of India are turned to-day hurt that faith in your unity, that faith in your power, you have done wrong not to yourselves alone but to the cause of the Indian Unity which you should embody and inspire. (*Cheers.*) I ask you, therefore, without entering into details that are technical, without elaborating about representations and proportions, to consider the ideal that I would hold out before you, the ideal of co-operation.

Why should there be division between caste and caste ? What was the meaning, the purpose, the significance, and the power of the caste division in the old days ? What was it but a division of labour for the glory of the Motherland, so that each within his own sphere could contribute perfect service that should enrich the wide diversity of life ? It was to build up, to create and foster national culture and national consciousness. Was that great system subtly built of a knowledge of human functions and possibilities meant to bring division ? Were the law makers enemies of their Mother-

land that they brought about this division of sects and castes? No. It was built up so that India might be served, each community honouring itself and finding its perfect expression through some service which would be best suited to its own way of thought, to its own capacity of achievement, its own sources of inspiration and its own opportunity of realisation. Have we grown so civilised that we have become untrue to our own social, intellectual and spiritual principles? (*Cheers.*) Have we become so alienated from the inner meanings of our evolution that what was meant to be a source of richer unity has become to-day a source of disunion, disintegration, degradation that affected the honour and progress of the Motherland? You have all made separate demands for reform, Brahmans, non-Brahmans, Mussalmans and Panchamas have gone on deputations. But what good are all these deputations, all these divided attempts? Let there be a hundred thousand deputations. If they can go in one united spirit with their different forms of expression of the cause, then each fresh demand freshly reiterated would mean the emphasising of the same demand. To-day

we stand so that if the Angels of Heaven would sit in judgment, as to the real meaning and link between demand and demand, very different in fact, he might be puzzled to know what was just and what was unjust. But we need not call the Angels of Heaven, nor need we await the leisure of another nation for justice. (*Cheers.*) Justice is within the soul of a nation, justice is the treasure of a nation, justice is the honour of a nation. If a nation chooses to rob itself, to dishonour itself, to be untrue to itself, not the Angels of Heaven, not the ministers of the King shall stay it. But if a nation chooses to honour itself, fulfil its duty and rise to the height of its own ambition, what prevents it but its own desires, what prevents it but its own folly, what prevents it but its own personal animosities and personal cleavages? I ask you, children of the immortal South, during the forthcoming years to be true to yourself, just to yourself, sink all divisions, obliterate all differences, forget all feuds, annihilate all hatreds, become one in the service of the Motherland, for, as I said, your flesh, Brahman or non-Brahman, is made out of

the clays and waters of the South and your spirit is filled by the breath of Her who is Bharata Mata, Bharata Mata, Bharata Mata.

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## SELF-GOVERNMENT FOR INDIA.

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### I. Speech at the Bombay Congress.

*Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, (Hyderabad, Deccan, —as a delegate from the United Provinces) who, on rising to support the Resolution on Self-Government at the Bombay Congress of December, 1915, was received with an ovation, said:—*

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen,—  
Till one moment ago it was not my proud privilege to be able to say “fellow-delegates,” because it is only at this very moment I have been—as a preliminary step, as a possible step to self-government that might come within a few years and about which, Sir, you have asked for a declaration—I have been asked to speak for a Province that is not my own, the United Provinces, and I was asked to represent their desires for this great moment which your enthusiasm makes me believe is the real desire of the people of this country.

After the eloquent and brilliant exposition and interpretation of the ideals of self-government, that have been

formulated by the many speakers before me, whose knowledge of the subject is better than mine, and whose services in the cause for attaining that self-government are infinitely greater than mine can ever be, you hardly need a word from me either to emphasise or to adorn the speeches that they have made and the ideals they have formulated. But since it is the desire of so many people here present that some woman from amidst you, some daughter of this Bharat Mother, should raise her voice, on behalf of her sisters, to second and support this resolution on self-government, I venture—though it seems presumption so to venture—to stand before you and to give my individual support as well as to speak in the name of many millions of my sisters of India, not only Hindu, but by Mussalman, Parsi and other sisters, for the sake of self-government which is the desire and the destiny of every human soul. This vast assemblage represents to-day in miniature the Federation of India to which we look forward not in the distant future. I see with the eye that is given to the world's poets who dream, and dream with a palpitating heart,

that vision, that expectation, that ecstasy of desire, that prayer that we shall send forth every moment of our lives that the dream may be realised. What is your dream? What is it to be in the words of your resolution? What are the responsibilities that go with the privileges you demand as a free and self-governing people? I speak not of the privileges that you demand to-day but of the responsibilities that they entail upon you. What are those responsibilities, what is the high burden that will go with that honour that you have demanded, with the right that you insist as your destiny, that destiny of the children of India?

Friends, believe me, as one of the speakers before me has said, this is the psychological moment of our nation's history. For the first time, after centuries upon centuries of political antagonism, of bitterness that comes from division between creed and creed, between race and race, after centuries of feuds and bloodshed, this is the psychological moment when the Hindu and the Mussalman are met together in this cosmopolitan city to co-operate together, to weld together into

a nationality with unity of feeling and purpose, of endeavour and achievement, without which there can be no India of to-morrow.

That is really the final burden, the final responsibility of this resolution that has been so brilliantly proposed and seconded. What is the purpose of the self-government that you demand? Is it that you wish to keep the privileges for this community or another, for this majority or another, excluding a minority of whatever caste or creed? No. You are demanding self-government that you may find in it your national regeneration, your national deliverance, so that you may be free not only from the despotism of political domination, but from that infinitely subtler and more dreadful and damning domination of your own prejudices and of your own self-seeking community or race. Having got arrested through the evolution of time and spirit, and seeking to obtain the right savouring of self-government, I ask you not to pause and say "We have found the ultimate goal," because it seems to me that we are likely to be left in the cold unless we are in by the open

door of the great Federation of India and establish that national feeling of Unity that knows no difference of caste or creed. If the communities may keep their own individual entities, it is only for the enriching of the federated national life. And so working together, feeling together, co-operating together, subordinating all merely sectarian and racial interests to the larger hope and the higher vision of United India you will be able to say with one voice as children of one Mother :—

Waken ! O Mother, thy children implore thee !

We kneel in thy presence to serve and adore thee !

The night is aflush with the dream of the morrow,

Why still dost thou sleep in thy bondage of sorrow ?

O waken, and sever the woes that enthrall us,

And hallow our hand for the triumphs that call us.

Are we not thine, O Beloved, to inherit  
The purpose and pride and the power of  
thy spirit ?

Ne'er shall we fail thee, forsake thee or  
falter,  
Whose hearts are thy home and thy shield  
and thine altar,  
Lo! we would thrill the high stars with  
thy story  
And set thee again in the forefront of  
glory.

Mother, the flowers of our worship have  
crowned thee !  
Mother, the flame of our hope shall sur-  
round thee !  
Mother, the sword of our love shall defend  
thee !  
Mother, the song of our faith shall attend  
thee !  
Our deathless devotion and strength shall  
avail thee !  
Hearken, O Queen and O Goddess, we hail  
thee !

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## II. Speech at the Lucknow Congress.

*Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, in supporting the Resolution on Self-Government at the Lucknow Congress of December, 1916, said :*

Mr. President, and fellow-citizens of the Indian nation,—From the very beginning of time it has always been the woman's privilege to have the last word on any subject and though that last word is sprung on her by the tyranny of the leaders that demand Home Rule, it is to vindicate the readiness of my sex, to stand by the men of India in all that concerns their national welfare and honour that I rise to obey the mandate of this tyranny. (*Hear, hear.*) Many speakers, before me, gifted and famous, full of knowledge and full of experience, have laid before you a scheme of Self-Government, and it is not for me to add words to their practical wisdom. I am merely a spectator from the watch-tower of dreams, and I watched the swift and troubled, sometimes chequered but nevertheless indomitable, time-spirit marching on in a pageant of triumph to the desired goal. ' Gentlemen, if to-day

Home Rule is no distant dream, if it is no mere fancy of Utopia, it is due to one thing more than to any other thing and perhaps you will let me enlighten you, so that you may offer your gratitude to the right sources. Less than four years ago, in this very city of Lucknow, this city of memories, this city of dead kings, a new hope came to birth, because the younger generation of Mussalmans had seen a vision that made it possible for the leaders of the National Congress to realise within the scope of practical vision, of practical work, of practical achievement, the supreme desire of the national soul. Gentlemen, it was my privilege to represent my great community on this occasion. It was the greatest honour of my life that I was invited to speak to this young generation of Islam that had seen this vision of Indian nationality which succeeded in passing a constitution whose essential creed was co-operation with the Hindu sister community. And because of this vision, four years after in this very city of Lucknow, we are now able to say that 'we shall have Home Rule, we will not



ask for it, we will create it of our own desires, out of our own enthusiasm, out of our own capacity, out of our inviolable unity, the unity of the Hindu and the Mussalman.' (*Hear, hear.*) Friends, Members of this Congress, citizens of India who have come from the farthest corners in this great country, I ask you in the name of that greater Nation that is born to-day in the city of Lucknow to offer your thanks to three men, though it might indeed seem invidious to make distinctions, where so many have been earnest, so many have been loyal and co-operating, it would be indeed lacking in gratitude on the part of this great assembly, were it not to offer a public recognition of gratitude to three most brilliant, most faithful, most courageous Mussalmans—the Rajah Saheb of Mahmudabad, that fearless and independent spirit, Mazahrul Haque, and thirdly Mr. M. A. Jinnah, of whom it was that the late Mr. Gokhale said to me, immediately after the last Muslim League in Lucknow, that 'He is the best ambassador of the Hindu-Muslim unity.' We are united to-day by the efforts of the Muslim League. To stand united, but united with such strength

that nothing from outside, not even the tyranny of Colonial domination, shall withhold from us our rights and privileges, withhold from us liberties that are due which we claim by our united voice. Nothing can prevent us from achieving the desires of our heart for, as Mr. Surendranath Banerjea told you, the final issues are in your hands. The ultimate decision is yours. Who will deny you the birth-right of freedom? If the millions of India speak with one voice and say, 'Ours is the right of freedom; we claim it; we take it; you dare not deny to us the birth-right of humanity,' nobody dare deny it. Centuries have gone by; the old divisions are healed; old wounds have got covered. Instead of building our regeneration on hatred and division, we stand to-day building our national future on the secure and imperishable foundations of love and united service. Each of us has seen a vision. To each of us has come that living consciousness that it is united service for the Motherland that constitutes the supremest hope of to-morrow. There is no one so mean, so weak, so selfish as not to think that in the service of the Motherland lies

joy greater than all personal joys; in suffering for her comes the supremest consolation in our personal sorrow and in her worship is the absolution of sin; to live for her is the most victorious triumph of life, ~~to die for her is to achieve the priceless crown of immortality.~~ (*Hear, hear, and applause.*) Let us then offer our lives unanimously as a tribute at the feet of the Motherland, for, as the great Prophet of Islam says "Under the feet of the Mother lies Paradise." (*Loud applause.*)

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### III. Speech at the Calcutta Congress.

*In supporting the Resolution on Self-Government at the Calcutta Congress, in December, 1917, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu said:—*

Several years ago, in this historic city, the modern nation-builder, Dadabhai Naoroji proclaimed the immortal message of Swaraj in your ears. I do not think that there was one single heart amongst you that did not respond to the call of your birthright that had so long been withheld from you. We are gathered here to-day to vindicate the message that he then gave, to confirm the truth that he proclaimed; and we demand the fulfilment of the dream that he dreamt for you on that memorable occasion. If I stand before you as a chosen representative of united India it is only because the womanhood of the Nation stands by you to-day and you require no proof more worthy, more convincing of your evidence for responsible and complete Self-Government than the sense of instinctive and fundamental justice you show in letting the voice of Indian womanhood to

speak and confirm the vision, the demand, the endeavour, the ambition of Indian manhood.

#### THE IDEAL OF THE RESOLUTION.

Other speakers having spoken before me and explained to you in detail the scheme that you have propounded, the ambition that the scheme embodied, and the aspiration that you are at the point of achieving, I shall only strive to interpret something that goes beyond the details of that scheme and that is the ideal that has been represented in this resolution. Remember, whatever may be the details of the proposition, whatever may be the facts and factors of any practical politics that you contemplate, its permanent inspiration is the spirit in which these demands and these aspirations are conceived and fulfilled to-day. What is it that we demand? Nothing new, nothing startling, but a thing that is as old as life, as old as human consciousness and that is the birthright of every soul in this world. Remember that within your own province, within your own territories, you should have a living chance and not be disinherited as exiles in your own

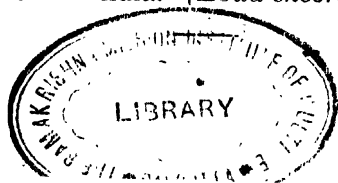
land, slaves in your own territories, dumb to all things, blind to all things, deaf to all things, that other Nations are enjoying. That day is over when we were content to be slaves in bondage, intellectual, and political, because the day of division is over. No race can be separated from another race in this great land. There is no longer an India of the Hindu or an India of the Mussalman, but it is an India which is a united India. Arguments are brought forward, you all know how cleverly and subtly, that India has always been a conquered country, a country always under foreign political domination. It is true, but India, you should know, is a great country with 5,000 years of Vedic culture that absorbed and enriched itself within the Aryan culture, Buddhist culture and European culture of the world. What is really at the base of all our grievances is that our self-respect has been trodden to dust, that our manhood has been challenged, that the primary right of man to defend his honour, to defend his women and to protect his country, have been taken away from him. That is the deadliest

insult that has not merely emasculated and embittered but has almost slain beyond redemption the spirit of the heroic Indian. Not that you have lost political power and domination, but that you have lost the spirit within you that was your birthright and inviolable treasure. You say that the Moghuls were your rulers. What was the policy of the Moghul rulers? They became part and parcel of the Indian race. They gave to the Indian people those rights and responsibilities which we demand to-day from the British Throne. These things which are embodied in the scheme for responsible autonomy were given to the Indians. In the time of Akbar's rule the power of the purse belonged to the conquered people of that Moghul Emperor. Did that power lead to differences? Did it breed disloyalty? No. That power knit together the peoples so alien to one another in race, faith, tradition and culture. With what result? So far from impoverishing the intellectual cultures of India the foreign conquests succeeded in assimilating foreign cultures with ours and the valour of the children of the Sword has added

to the valour of the children of the Sun. In that combination India was honoured. India had not to face the question of submission and implied bondage to conquerors. When we talk of Responsible Government it does not mean an illusion of power. Power without responsibility is demoralising. We demand not license of power, but we demand all the dignity, the sanity, the creative authority of power that is responsible to itself and responsible to the Nation. We do not want to be separated from the life of the people. We want no divided power. Our goal is the same, but temperaments are different; conditions are different; environments are different; and all these things being considered, India is not an India of one race or another, of one party or another, of the Moderate or the Extremist; but in politics the ideal is always there, but there must be a certain amount of expediency used. That is the only compromise that has been made. All life is a life of compromises. The only thing that matters is that for the sake of the weaker the stronger must be prepared to make some sacrifices. Who says that there is a man or



woman here to-day who does not desire, waking or sleeping, that does not dream that autonomy, that freedom, that liberty, that is self-contained and conveyed by this resolution? One community has got into the race earlier than another community; and possesses advantage by that circumstance and that is the meaning of the compromise that we feel for the weaker. We confess that it is a compromise, but we say that the demand that we make in the Congress-League scheme is an irreducible minimum and that minimum should not be delayed one hour longer. I am only a woman and I should like to say to you all, when your hour strikes, when you need torch-bearers in the darkness to lead you, when you want standard-bearers to uphold your banner and when you die for want of faith, the womanhood of India will be with you as the holders of your banner, and the sustainers of your strength. And if you die, remember, the spirit of Padmini of Chittoor, is enshrined with the manhood of India. (*Loud cheers.*)



## INTERNMENT OF MAHOMED ALI.

*Speaking at the All-India Moslem League in December, 1917, on the release of the interned Moslem leaders, Mrs. Naidu said :—*

If they were paying homage to the empty chair, they were paying homage not to Mahomed Ali in flesh but to Mahomed Ali, who was the embodiment of the new spirit of Indian nationalism. She then referred to the internment of Mr. Mahomed Ali and said that the 'honour of Islam had been challenged by that internment and on them lay the honour of Islam. They should not be contented with sitting quiet and shedding tears.' They must be consolidated in their faith. Political destiny might fail, territorial possession might decay, but Islam would not die. They wanted Moslem India to be true to Islam. They wanted the manhood of Islam, the valour of Islam. They should be united, they should sink all their personal differences, they should sink all their political differences—they were of different schools but that amongst themselves—and be not afraid of any sacrifice.

## ETERNAL INDIA

TO M. K. GANDHI.

*The following poem was contributed by  
Mrs. Sarojini Naidu to the "Young India:"*

Thou whose unaging eyes have gazed upon  
The Vision of Time's glory and decay,  
Round thee have flower-like centuries  
rolled away

Into the silence of primeval dawn,  
Thou hast out-lived Earth's empires and  
outshone

The fabled grace and grandeur of their  
sway,

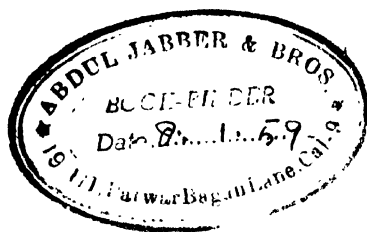
The far-famed rivals of thine yesterday,  
Iran and Egypt, Greece and Babylon,  
Sealed in To-morrow's vast abysmal womb  
What do thy grave prophetic eyes foresee  
Of swift or strange world-destiny and  
doom ?

What sudden kingdoms that shall rise and  
fall,

While thou dost still survive, surpass them  
all,

Secure, supreme in ageless ecstasy ?







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